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Exclusive UK Review

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IN THIS ISSUE

RESIDENT EVIL

EXCLUSIVE UK REVIEW

It's THE game you MUST buy a GameCube for. Find out why in CVG FIRST

p. 22

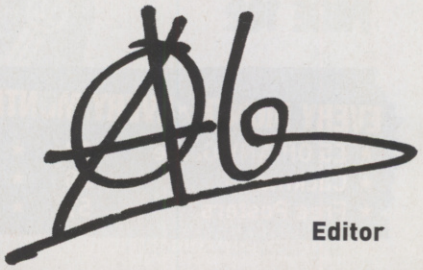
GOTTA GET A CUBE

Those four words say it all. If you haven't already got a GameCube, you've got to get one, and fast. For £130 (only slightly more than three full-price PS2 games) you get a great looking console that in the coming months will be blessed by some of the greatest videogames in CVG's history.

And while Monkey Ball and Luigi's Mansion are all worthy thumb-punishers, the first true classic Cube game hits the shelves in the next few weeks – Resident Evil. I won't waste you're time singing its praises now – turn to page 22 for the EXCLUSIVE UK review and ultimate lowdown. You'll be gagging for a Cube when you see this baby up and running.

And that's just the start of Cube's great game avalanche. Mario brings a little sunshine into all our lives in September, and then Zelda at the start of next year.

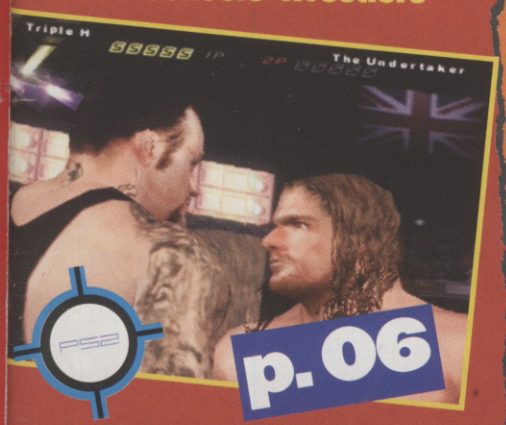
So stop reading this, forget going out and use the cash to save up for Nintendo's super-cute console. You won't regret it...



Editor

WWE SMACKDOWN! 4

All-new pics and info on Smackdown!4 and other class console wrestlers



p. 06

STUNTMAN

Four years in the making and well worth the wait – fact

p. 76

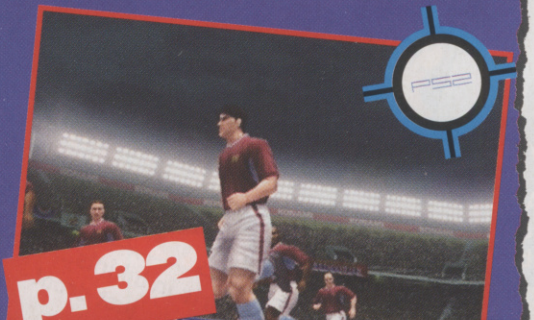
THE HOTTEST DRIVING GAMES

CVG tests-drives 11 of the hottest new car games

p. 106

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 2

The perfect PS2 remedy to World Cup withdrawal



p. 32

CONTENTS

ISSUE 250
SEPT. 2002

BLADE 2

Blood, gore and great gameplay, all in one

PAGE 52

ETERNAL DARKNESS

Exclusive play of Cube's horror adventure

PAGE 42

ONIMUSHA 2

Behind the scenes of this monster Samurai slasher

PAGE 48

EXTENDED PLAY

Complete Buffy Guide

PAGE 68

The best cars in GT Concept

PAGE 72

TRAILBLAZER

You can win big-time with CVG's prize blitz

PAGE 102

DOA girls in bikinis... Don't speak, just drool

PREVIEWS

BLINX	30
PRO EVOLUTION 2	32
MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2	33
RATCHET & CLANK	34
DISNEY SPORTS	36
MX SUPERFLY	38
MALICE	38
SLY RACCOON	40
ETERNAL DARKNESS	42
FINAL FANTASY XI	44
PSO 2	44
THE THING	46
ONIMUSHA 2	48
MORROWIND	50
MEDAL OF HONOR GBA	51
SMUGGLER'S RUN	51
GEKIDO ADVANCE	51
BLADE 2	52
GUILTY GEAR X	53
LOONS	54
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM	55

REVIEWS

STUNTMAN	76
SCOOBY DOO	80
MEN IN BLACK II	80
GO! GO! BECKHAM	81
ENCLAVE	82
DELTA FORCE	84
HUNTER: THE RECKONING	85
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF	86
CASTLEVANIA 2	86
DRAGON BALL Z	87
MANIAC RACERS	88
ARCADE CLASSICS	88
TRANSWORLD SURF	89
AGASSI TENNIS	90
ZOOCUBE	90
GORE	91
OPERATION FLASHPOINT: RESISTANCE	92
FREEKSTYLE	94
KING OF FIGHTERS	96
MEDABOTS AX	96
DINO STALKER	98
SPIRIT	99

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★ £5 Off ANY Game	12	★ MAILBAG	61
★ Cackman	20	★ Extended Play Tips	65
★ Free Posters	57	★ Subscriptions	100

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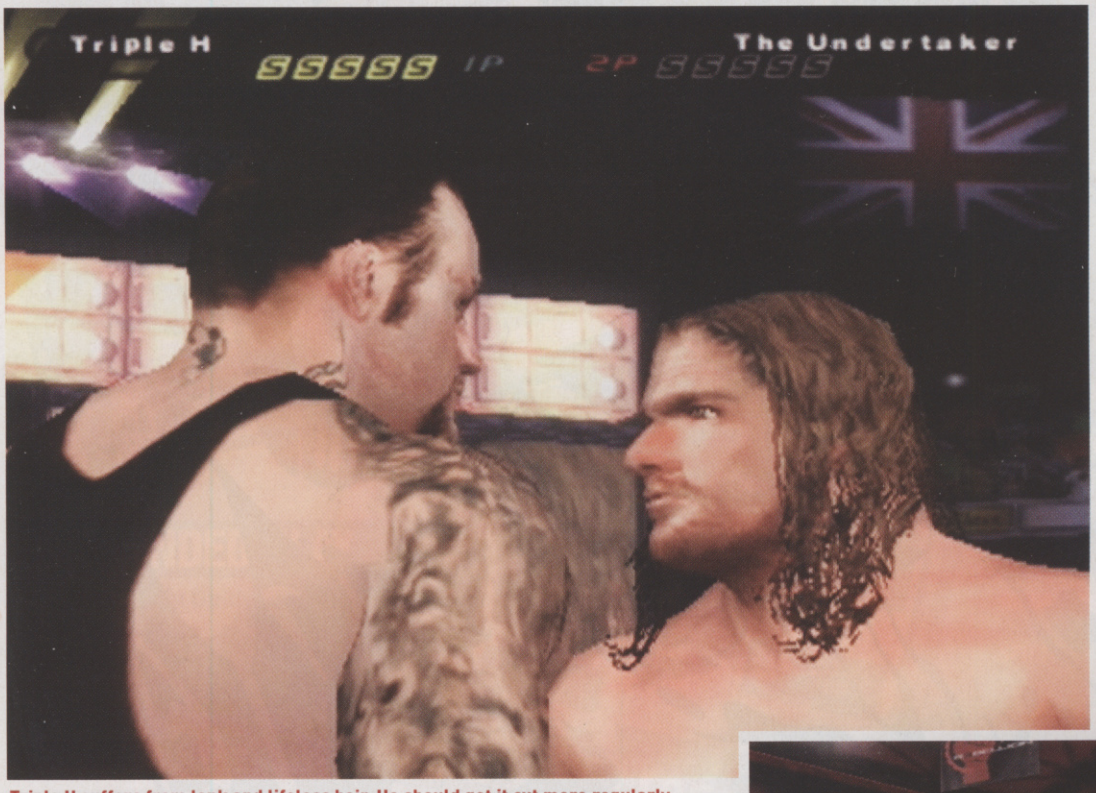
THE HOTTEST GAMES & GOSSIP FROM AROUND THE GLOBE

WWE Smackdown! 4: Shut Your Mouth

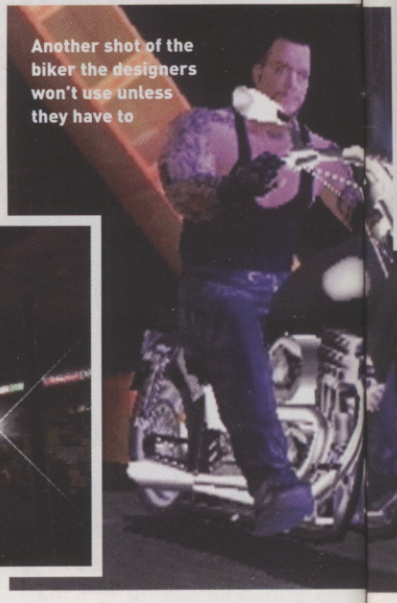
NEW SHOTS FROM THE FOURTH INSTALMENT OF THE WWE SERIES



Triple H suffers from lank and lifeless hair. He should get it cut more regularly

No, YOU shut your mouth, because number four in the Smackdown! series comes to PlayStation and it's got more stars, modes and matches than ever before.

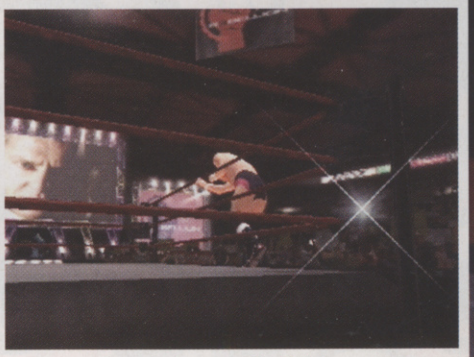
An updated roster gives players the chance to choose from a whole range of superstars including Hollywood Hulk Hogan, Ric Flair and Stacy Keibler. You then enter an in-depth story mode modelled on the real thing – including backstage visits to Madison Square Gardens – as well as taking part in a variety of match types including Elimination Tag, Captain Fall Tornado Six-Man Tag and Slobber Knocker Anywhere. Factor in improved moves and better TV-style commentary and you've got a game that's got us oiling our biceps with excitement. Bring it on!



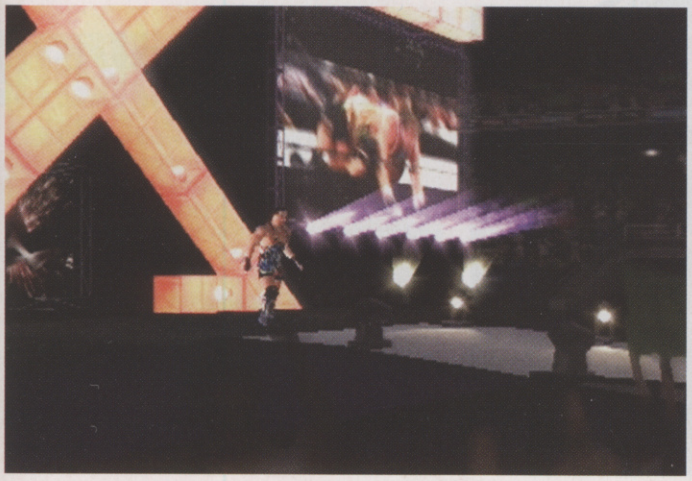
Another shot of the biker the designers won't use unless they have to

Who's a clever boy, then? He's a winner

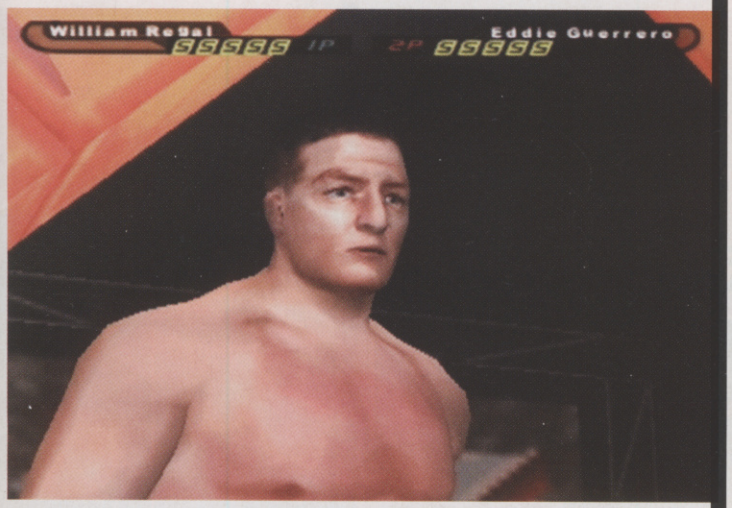
But is there a biking minigame? Strange



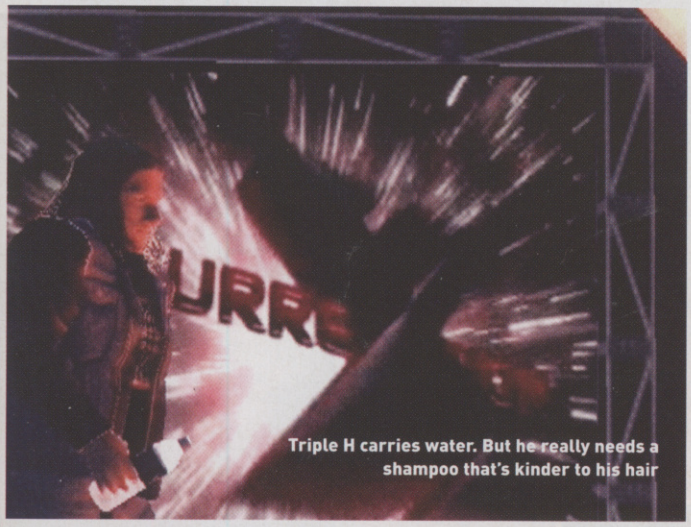
The spectacle and glamour of it all is here



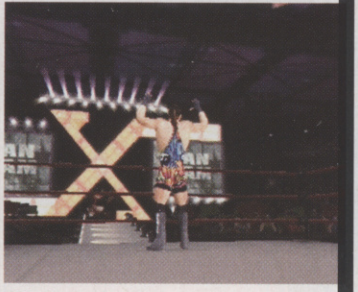
A bit blurry, but a good guide to the sheer scale of the event



Regal? Well, he sure looks like a queen. And he needs some after-sun on his tits



Triple H carries water. But he really needs a shampoo that's kinder to his hair

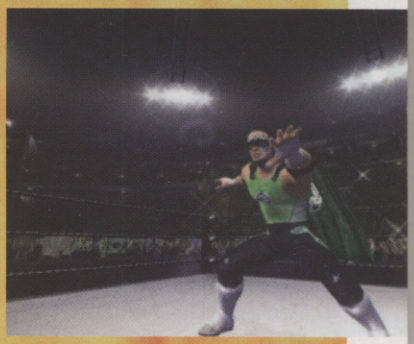


This is the view from the defeated angle. Not nice, is it?

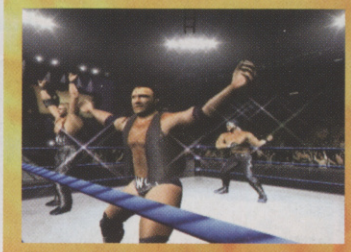
WWE Wrestlemania X8

Headed for the GameCube, Wrestlemania X8 is a recreation of the Canadian wrestle event, and it should give fans a taste of what the tournament is like.

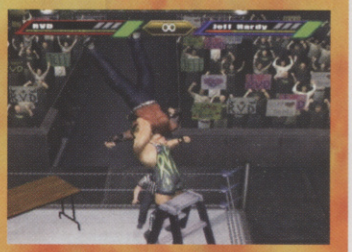
We particularly like the idea of the Championship Road mode, where you have to wrestle your rookie up to superstardom in pursuit of the championship. The game – out around September time – will hopefully include all the big names from the circuit, and judging by these shots, it's looking pretty tasty too...



"Damn, I lost Batman!"



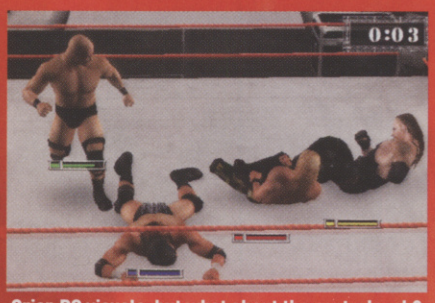
The performance of YMCA is an undoubted highlight



Gosh, let's hope they don't fall on a member of the audience

WWE Raw

PC owners, remember the nights you spent crying, tears like diamonds falling to your pillow because there were no wrestling games for your machine? Well there is one now (or rather, coming soon), and look, here's a picture of it. There, there...



Crisp PC visuals, but what about the controls, eh?

STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS • STOP PRESS

Poke Corner

Nintendo has confirmed the titles of two new Pokemon GBA game. Titled Pokemon Ruby and Sapphire, both are due out in Japan on November 21.

Barcode Bedlam!

They're big news in the States, now Skannerz have arrived in the UK. Costing £19.99, Skannerz are a cross between Pokemon, Tamagotchi and a barcode scanner.

The idea is that monsters are hiding in the barcodes, and by scanning barcodes (any barcode can work) you either catch them, or fight them. There are three different tribes to collect, and you can link together different Skannerz to fight mates. Looks like trips to the supermarket are about to get better...

Xbox Hacked!

Hackers have been hard at work on the Xbox, creating a mod chip that allows it to do all kinds of things it's not supposed to. These include playing movies, pirated games and music files. One student from Massachusetts has even discovered a way to interrupt the Xbox's start-up sequence and make it run on other operating systems.

Meanwhile, bedroom boffins have also worked out how to make the Xbox play N64 games like Zelda and Extreme-G. Apparently they don't run very well, but you know, it's early days yet. Maybe the era of non-console-specific gaming isn't too far away...

Give Us A Ring

RINGS ON GBA – EXCLUSIVE SCREENSHOTS

There's plenty of Lord Of The Rings action coming up to get your Middle Earth juices flowing. Firstly, check out this lot from Lord Of The Rings: Fellowship Of The Ring on GBA. These shots are EXCLUSIVE to CVG. Nobody else has 'em, so get a good look.

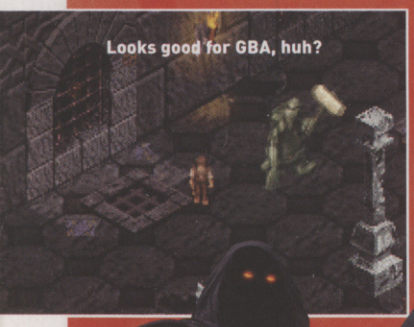
The game is being described as a diet RPG, and aims to condense some of the more complex aspects of PC role-players into a manageable handheld format. Players get to control all nine members of the Fellowship and the action takes place across Middle Earth locations familiar from the books and the film. Combat will be turn-based – which is what you'd expect – but there will also be the option to let the AI handle the combat, if you want.

Meanwhile, Vivendi is also preparing LOTR games for the Xbox, PS2 and PC. These games will be singleplayer action-adventure titles, calling on players to travel around, solve puzzles and – most importantly – massacre millions of orcs...

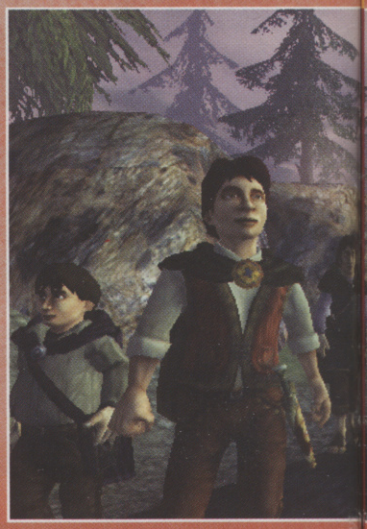
Frodo gets jumped by three cave trolls

The game world is pretty huge

All nine of The Fellowship are in



Looks good for GBA, huh?



Aragorn's sword is an absolute beast

Fight first, ask questions later

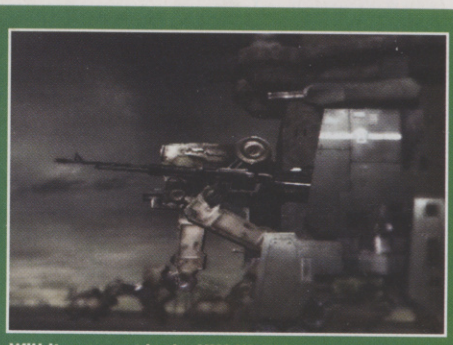
The text is easy to read here, but on a GBA screen?

Zelda: Majora's Mask on Xbox? Some geeks have managed to make it happen

The mechs are as big as a house, no lie

There's some serious hardware to play with

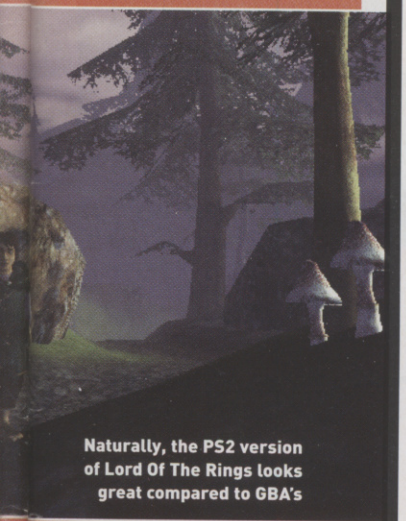
Steel Balls



Will it come out in the UK? We'll keep you updated

These are the latest screenshots of mech-fighting game Steel Battalion, which has the weirdest-looking controller we've ever seen.

It's pretty damn sophisticated though – you need about ten button pushes just to get your mech started. How cool is that?



Naturally, the PS2 version of Lord Of The Rings looks great compared to GBA's

Three-pack!

Three new action games are heading towards your precious little handheld, courtesy of publisher BAM! Let's take a look at them, shall we?

ECKS VS SEVER 2

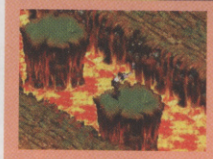
As it sounds, this is the sequel to the GBA first-person shooter, which sees agents Ecks and Sever working together to defeat a bunch of terrorist groups. There are 24 singleplayer missions and five different modes. Expect it around November.

More FPS action on GBA

Pistols, machine guns... The lot

A SOUND OF THUNDER

No, we haven't heard of it, either



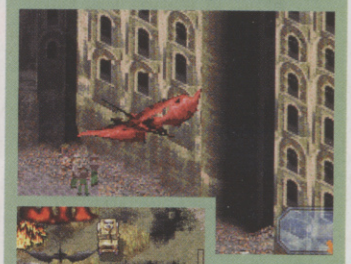
Leaping over lava pits. How original

This one for Nintendo's wee handheld sounds very promising. A bit like Dino Crisis, it's a 3D action-adventure, pitching you into a different time when animals have mutated. It's based on a movie of the same name, which is out next year.

REIGN OF FIRE

Helicopters versus dragons. Sounds like an idea that can't miss. Trouble is, our spies tell us that the film isn't up to much. We'll have to hope for better things from this GBA tie-in, which looks as though it's going to be nothing if not action-packed.

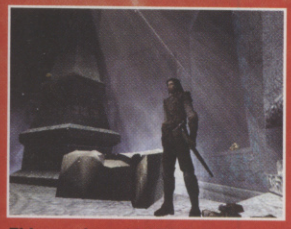
Dragons versus helicopters. Mmm...



Let's hope it's better than the movie

Wargs attack the Big G, but the wizard's got tricks up his sleeve

Gandalf drops a real stinker



This version of LOTR is based on the book, not the movie

Babe On A Boy

At last! Lara Croft is finally coming to the Game Boy Advance. The gun-wielding first lady of games will land on the GBA around November time this year in Tomb Raider: The Prophecy.

Details of the game are scarce at the mo, but we've seen Lara at work with her twin pistols and her shooting's looking pretty sharp. There're all the usual gymnastic moves we've come to expect, as well as other assets that make Lara the lady she is. See it on www.computerandvideogames.com.

Retro ninja action on Nintendo's handheld

Kill 'im with your sword

Looks kinda like the Ewok village, huh?

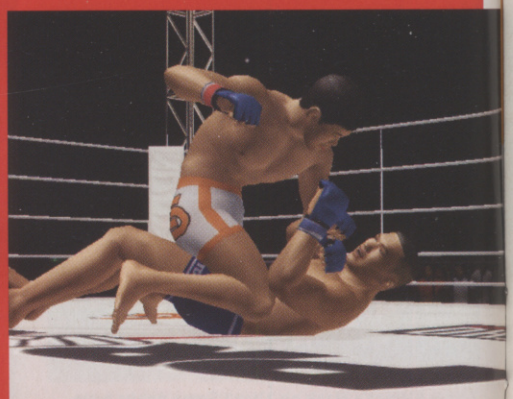
Slit Throats On Your GBA!

We never thought we'd see the day when you could play Shinobi on the Game Boy Advance, but it's a brand new dawn, as they say.

Yup, the old Sega arcade and Mega Drive classic is coming to GBA as The Revenge Of Shinobi, giving players the chance to play a ninja trying to get hold of five mystical swords. It's side-scrolling, Ninja combat, classic arcade action all the way – and we love it already!

Fights continue on the canvas, and it can get bloody

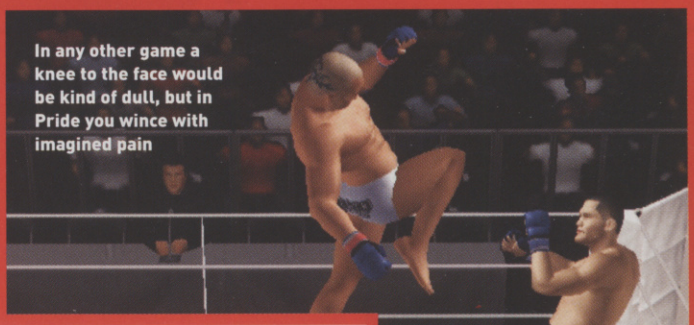
Grapple moves form the basis of many attacks



To counter any attack you input the same command

PRIDE FC FOR PS2: THINGS COULD GET...

Nasty!



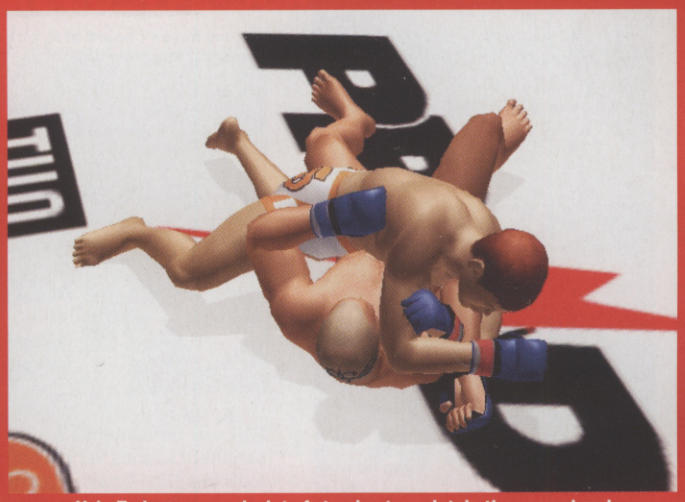
In any other game a knee to the face would be kind of dull, but in Pride you wince with imagined pain

Pride FC is not, as the title suggests, the name of a football team. In fact, it refers to a fighting championship – and one where *anything* goes.

Imagine a real-life Tekken tournament, except without the glitz and glamour, and you're halfway to getting the feel of Pride FC. Indeed, the combat system is very similar to Tekken's. The difference is, in Pride you can choose from multiple disciplines, bringing all kinds of combat styles into one ring under one rule. So wrestlers can take on kickboxers, for example, making use of thousands of different available animations. Characters bleed like stuck pigs, and in no time the canvas looks like your local Casualty on a Saturday night. Hmm, nice.

Pride is out on PS2 sometime before Christmas.

Like the WWE, all fighters make an impressive entrance. Unlike the WWE, this is not a pantomime



Vale Tudo guys need a lot of stamina to maintain the upper hand

The stage is set for the most brutal but heroic battles seen in the ring

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Turn the lights out and pretend it's the end of the movie

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Time For Adventure!

Fighting is handled in real time now, making the action more enjoyable

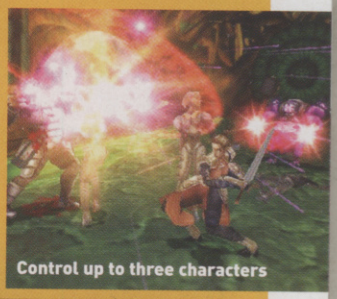
Role-player fans *need* a PS2 these days. Especially since Summoner 2 is now heading that way, promising huge 3D locations, the ability to control up to three characters at a time, with each of them fully customisable.

The main thrust of the game – the 'summoning' bit, where you harness the language of the gods – has been given a major overhaul, making Summoner 2 a very tasty RPG prospect indeed. It should be out around September time...

Harness the language of the gods and summon monsters

Fantasy role-playing games are always terrific for really amazing battles, because anything goes!

Well, here's a couple of good reasons to play S2



Control up to three characters

These tree-like monsters are wishing they weren't here!

Wicked games at cool new prices!

The most respected Capcom title of all time with its tight gameplay and unbeatable graphics

SUPER STREET FIGHTER II

"An excellent fighter which is totally unmatched on the GBA in all departments" GBX - 90%.

"A perfect choice for any GBA owner looking for some great fighting action on the go". GAMESPOT.COM - 9/10

"Probably the best portable beat'em up ever" EDGE

GAME BOY ADVANCE

Ubi Soft

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MULTI-FORMAT TOP SELLERS

1	Medal Of Honor: Frontline	(PS2)
2	Spider-Man: The Movie	(PS2, GC, XB, GBA)
3	Neverwinter Nights	(PC)
4	Grand Theft Auto III	(PS2)
5	V-Rally 3	(PS2, GBA)
6	2003 FIFA World Cup	(PS2, GC, XB, GBA, PS)
7	Smash Court Tennis	(PS2)
8	Final Fantasy X	(PS2)
9	007: Agent Under Fire	(GC, XB, PS2)
10	Pikmin	(GC)

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MARIO VILLAIN ART – FIRST LOOK

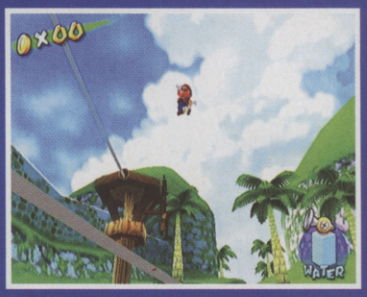
Bad Mario!

He fetches coins, he jumps on Yoshi's back, he runs around all over the place and leaps across amazing gaps. What can it mean? Only one thing of course: Mario is back. And this time, there's an imposter.

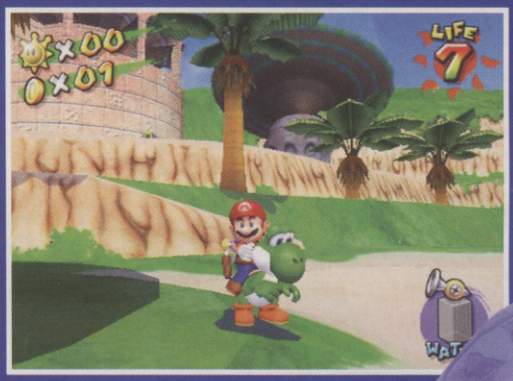
For the first time we can show you the villain of Mario Sunshine, the new Mario game. He's the transparent-looking geezer who goes around spraying graffiti that Mario has to clear up using the hose attachment.

The game's already out in Japan, and will be in the US soon, but we in the UK will have to wait until September. In the meantime, check out the Mario Imposter artwork, as well as these new shots...

First Liquid Snake, now Liquid Mario!

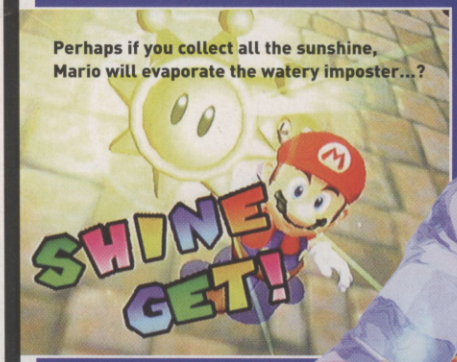


Bouncing on ropes, we like this idea a lot!

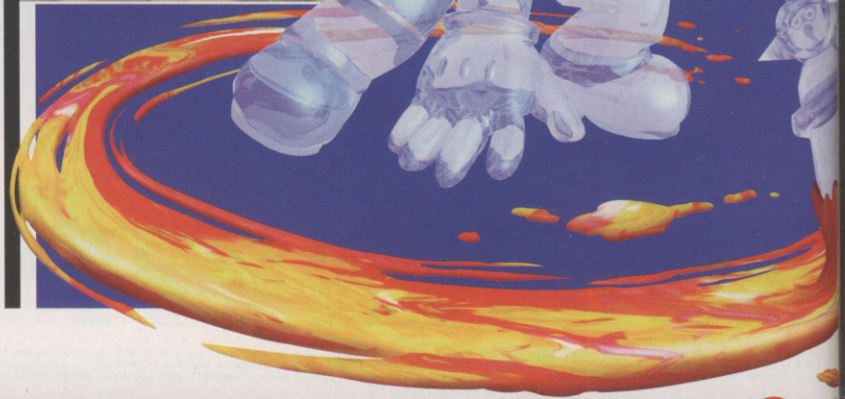


He-ey Yoshi, Yoshi, Yoshi, Yoshi, Yo-shiiii!

It all starts here, just as Mario is getting ready to enjoy his hols!

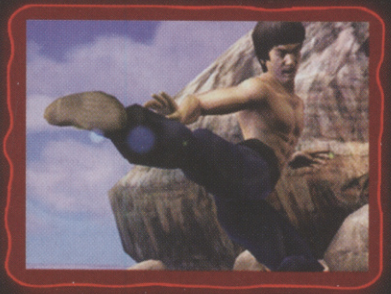


Perhaps if you collect all the sunshine, Mario will evaporate the watery imposter...?

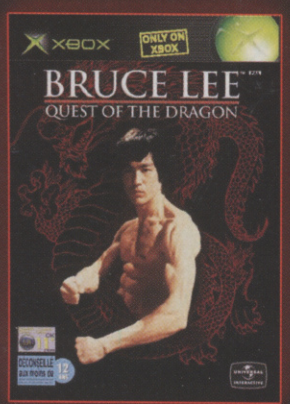


UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE

FIGHT TO CARRY ON HIS LEGACY



ONLY ON XBOX



BRUCE LEE
QUEST OF THE DRAGON

- Fight as Bruce Lee, with authentic motion-captured Jeet Kune Do moves.
- Battle your way through London, Hong Kong and San Francisco in 30 action-packed levels.

XBOX

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RONIN

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BOING!

Ayane swaps deadly moves for a deadly bikini

DOA XTREME BEACH VOLLEYBALL – NEW SHOTS

Ask mum and dad to leave the room while you check out these NEW shots from Dead Or Alive Xtreme Beach Volleyball.

It's got all the jiggly norks you've come to expect from DOA games, but this could be a bit more than a novelty for your Xbox. All the female characters from the beat 'em ups will be here, as well as a new character called Lisa.

The luscious lovelies have been invited to an island and amuse themselves by playing volleyball on the beach. But there's other stuff to do too. Like playing in arcades where you can play a Dead Or Alive 3 mini-game, or a casino for special DOA versions of the slots, blackjack, poker and roulette. There's also a lifeguard drill, a dance competition and – wait for it – a beauty contest.

All this and it supports user-ripped CDs, so you can play your own favourite tracks in the game. Expect to see it around September time...

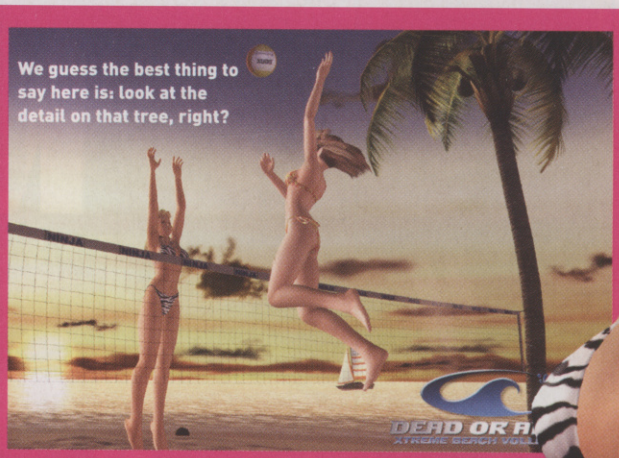
Over to you, new girl. Let's see if you can hit a ball better than you can hit me!

Pamper your volleyball partner and they'll play harder!

A vision of blonde hair and blue eyes

Busty Tina... what are we saying?! All these girls are busty. Okay, 'blonde' Tina flexes here muscles

A new girl for DOA4...?



Kasumi likes to relax while you summon the courage to start pressing all the right buttons

Only the awesome power of Xbox is capable of rendering such beautiful ladies!

This is why we hate the beach: sand gets on your balls

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GOLDEN JOYSTICK Awards 2002

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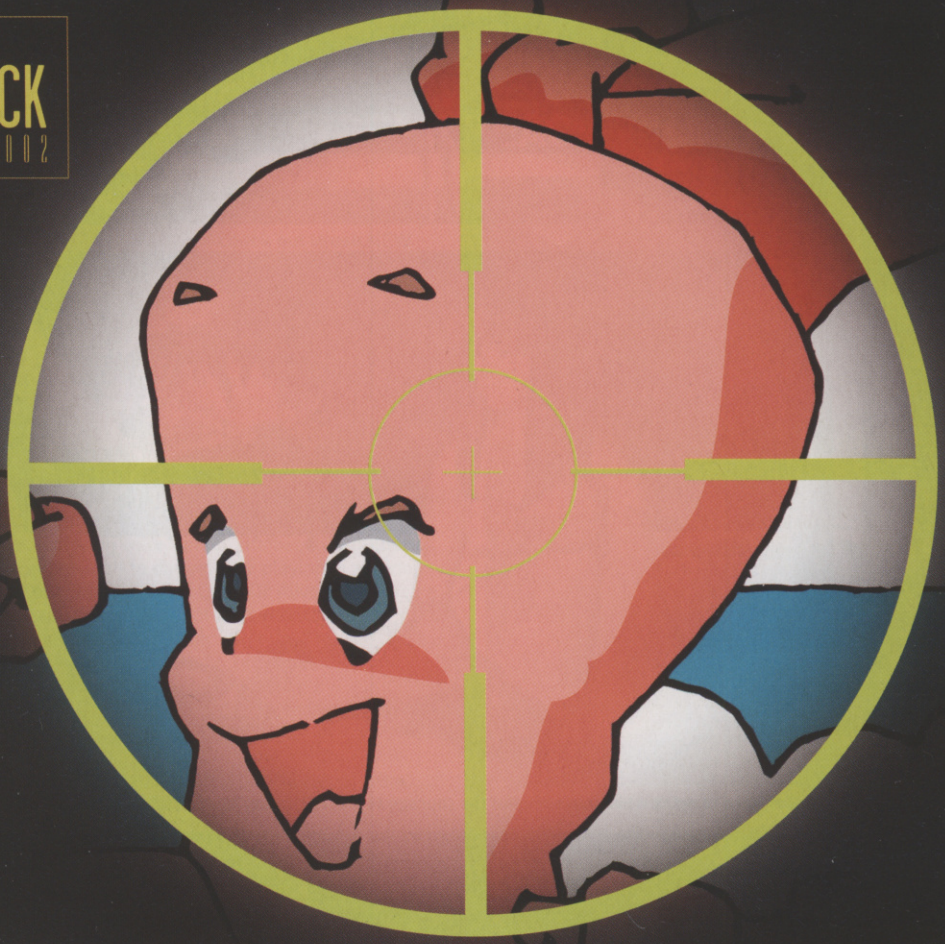


...OR THE WORM GETS IT

(THE GOLDEN JOYSTICK, THAT IS)

WHICH WERE THE GREATEST games of the last year? What's that? Can't hear you. Speak up – if you don't have your say then someone else will decide for you, and they're bound to get it wrong. So vote now, or Worms Blast, Jet Ion GP and Mortal Kombat Advance could all score awards.

THE GOLDEN WHAT?

See, the prestigious Golden Joystick Awards are where you lot get to pick important stuff like the best releases and gaming developments of the past 12 months. Then CVG and a bunch of other games mags throw a big ol' knees up and hand out coveted awards for services rendered unto gamingkind – all based on YOUR votes.

Cool, eh? You get to repay many hours of quality gaming *and* see your favourite games and games maker gain the recognition they so richly deserve; they get to lord it up like the games gods they are; and we at CVG get to eat too much prawn vindaloo and vomit in the bogs at London's swish Dorchester Hotel. Everyone's a winner.

Actually, we're feeling *so* generous that if you do vote, we'll also put your name into a prize draw where two lucky gits will get to go on a one-minute trolley dash around a Virgin Megastore! (Terms and conditions apply) Five of you also get to attend the awards. After all, someone's got to hold Alex's hair out of the water when his head's down the pan...

Now for the slightly-dull-but-important stuff. It couldn't be easier to vote: just log onto www.goldenjoystick.co.uk and do your stuff. You can read more details about the categories and relevant dates on the Golden Joystick Awards page on p97, but check the box on the right for some of the highlights.

AWARDS

If, in all of the excitement, you're mind's gone completley blank, CVG's here to help you out with a few suggestions to get you started. Check page 97 for the full list of categories.

- **GAME OF THE YEAR**
  Remember these... ? jungle.com

Metal Gear 2

Halo

GTA 3

- **PC/XBOX/GC/PS2/HANDHELD GAMES OF THE YEAR**
- **RETAILER OF THE YEAR** EA GAMES
- **HARDWARE OF THE YEAR** SPYRO CRASH BANDICOOT
- **GAME INNOVATION OF THE YEAR**

Sim Wild

You wanna be her? Go on then!

The new 3D look is sweet as

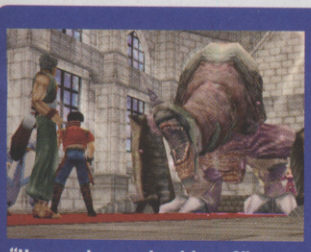
The number one-selling PC game of all time is coming to PS2 – with a few nifty extras.

The game, where players have to create a perfect virtual home and control the lives of its occupants, shifted phenomenal amounts on PC, but the PS2 outing will be all-new material. For a start, the control system has been redesigned, and gameplay is now level-based. It'll also boast a fully 3D world, filled with new characters not in any other Sims game.

But the best enhancement is a new two-player element, where players can either play against each other or work together. A release date for the game has yet to be confirmed.

Meanwhile, The Sims is also due to go online for PC owners. For details of the game, go to www.thesimsonline.com.

Unleashed: the new Sims x-pack



"Um, maybe we should run?"

We don't know what this is either

Wanna Fight?

Legaia 2: Duel Saga from Eidos is a sequel to the PSone role-player boasting real-time backgrounds and voice acting, and – judging from these new shots – some stunning visuals.

The game differs from the usual role-player fare. The battle system uses directional button pushes to fight, which should mean an approach more similar to a fighting game combo than an RPG turn-based system. You'll also be able to combine different times to create more powerful weapons and tools.

The game is currently being translated into English from Japanese and should be out around September time.

Check out the mint special effects

Another RPG on PS2? Sheesh...

* * * * * * * * * *

SAY YOU BORROWED A MATE'S CD AND SCRATCHED IT, WOULD YOU:

* * * * * * * * * *

GIVE IT BACK AND SAY IT WAS SCRATCHED WHEN YOU GOT IT? TURN TO PAGE 43

* * * * OR * * * *

ADMIT SCRATCHING IT AND OFFER TO BUY A NEW ONE? TURN TO PAGE 51

NEW THINKING NEW DRINKING

Conquer The Globe!

C&C: GENERALS SHOTS

Generals plays like C&C of old but looks much sweeter

See these screenshots? They're the most recent images of Command & Conquer: Generals, coming to PC. Looking good, yes?

As usual, you'll be in charge of one of three massive armies across "a globe teetering on the edge of Armageddon" (it sez here). The idea is to engage in real-time warfare across 27 campaigns. There are all kinds of enhancements for this new version, but what really sets it apart is the level of detail in the 3D landscapes – it looks awesome.

Rotate the 3D world around to see the action from all angles

Backgrounds are lush and full of detail

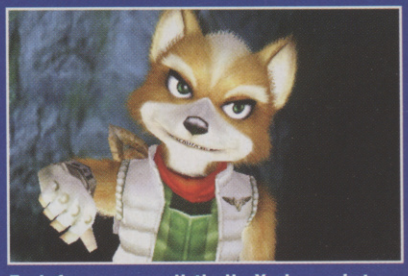
The Zelda-style controls work really well

For Fox Sake!

GAMECUBE GETS SET FOR THE FOX

Here are some shots of Star Fox Adventures to whet your appetite prior to its GameCube release later this year.

Fox will be able to step out of his Arwing to explore a huge world full of forests, animals, puzzles and – of course – adventure. You'll need to learn the secrets of a mystical staff to fend off enemies and use it to cast spells, before hopping back into the Arwing to journey or fight. It's Star Fox, Jim, but not as we know it...



Fox's fur moves realistically. Yeah, so what... But it still looks kinda nice

Is this Fox's mothership? Could be...

Meet blue babe Krystal and pal, Prince Tricky

STREET

IN STORES

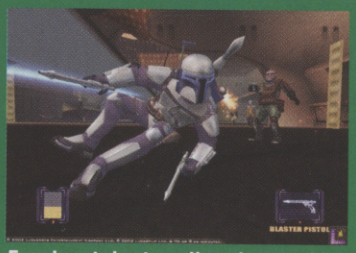
DATE		TICK BOX	NAME	FORMAT
JULY	27	☐	SMUGGLERS RUN: WARZONES	GC
	30	☐	BRUCE LEE: QUEST OF THE DRAGON	XBX
	30	☐	COMMANDOS 2 – MEN OF COURAGE	PS2/XBX
	30	☐	DINO STALKER	PS2
	30	☐	FILA WORLD TOUR TENNIS	XBX
	30	☐	MADDEN NFL 2003	PC
	30	☐	MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2	PS2/XBX/GBA
	30	☐	MEDIEVAL: TOTAL WAR	PC
	30	☐	NICKTOONS RACING	GBA
	30	☐	PREMIER MANAGER 2002	PS2
	30	☐	PROJECT ZERO	PS2
	30	☐	SPLASHDOWN	XBX
	30	☐	SUDDEN STRIKE 2	PC
	30	☐	TACTICAL OPS	PC
	30	☐	WORMS BLAST	GC

DATE		TICK BOX	NAME	FORMAT
JULY	31	☐	AGGRESSIVE INLINE	GC/GBA
	31	☐	CAPCOM VS SNK 2: EO	GC
	31	☐	GO GO BECKHAM: ADVENTURE ON SOCCER ISLAND	GBA
	TBC	☐	EVERYBODY'S GOLF 3	PS2
	TBC	☐	F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP 2	PS1
	TBC	☐	HELLBOY	PS1
	TBC	☐	JEKYLL & HYDE	PS2
	TBC	☐	K HAWK (SURVIVAL INSTINCT)	PC
	TBC	☐	KING OF FIGHTERS EX NEOBLOOD	GBA
	TBC	☐	PRYZM CHAPTER ONE: THE DARK UNICORN	PS2
AUGUST	2	☐	BATMAN VENGEANCE	PC
	2	☐	DIVINE DIVINITY	PC
	2	☐	FIFA 2001 PLATINUM	PS2
	2	☐	GREMLINS	GBA
	2	☐	LEGEND OF ALON D'AR	PS2

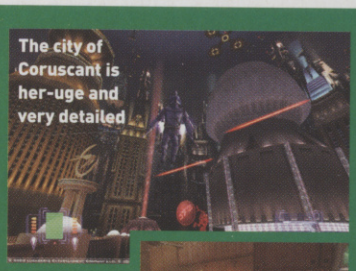
All Fetts Are On!

Here are the latest screens for Star Wars Bounty Hunter, the new LucasArts game for PS2 and GameCube, in which you get to play as Jango Fett and go bounty hunting.

As you can see from the shots, we're talking fast (and usually airborne) action taking place across a variety of landscapes, including this tasty-looking city.

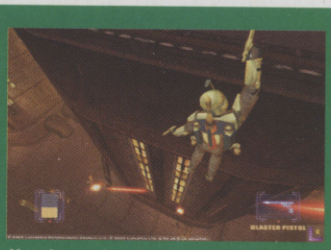


Even bounty hunters slip on banana skins



The city of Coruscant is her-uge and very detailed

Can you smell what the Fett is cooking? Deep fried alien, probably



Not the easiest kill but hey, it's Jango

"Stars Wars fans have been demanding a bounty hunter game for years", said Tom Byron of LucasArts. "Bounty Hunter will make the wait well worth it."

RED FACTION 2 ALL-NEW SHOTS

Destroy almost everything!

RF2 is sharp and plays fast

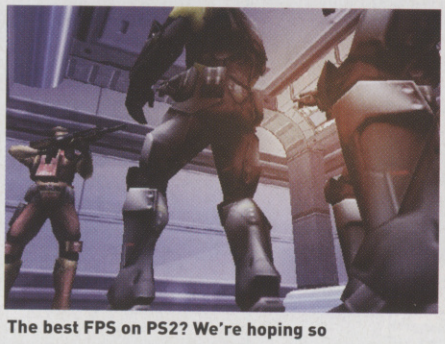
Big explosions! Drool!

Fict Or Faction?

Red Faction 2 is looking good – as you can tell from these brand new screens. What's more, developer Volition is promising a host of improvements to the original. Kool and, indeed, the Gang.

What's new? For a start, the PS2 game's graphics have been significantly buffed up. New weapons and better AI are also on the menu, as you head up an elite team of specialists to defend your country.

We're expecting the game before the end of the year...



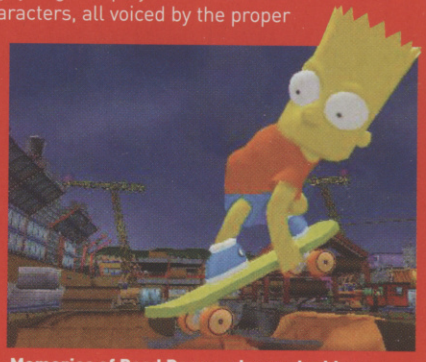
The best FPS on PS2? We're hoping so

Bart Hawks

SIMPSONS ON PS2 – AGAIN

The Simpsons seem to want to rip off, ahem, we mean 'borrow', every other game going. Now, after Simpsons Road Rage ripped off Crazy Taxi, along comes The Simpsons Skateboarding, which looks remarkably similar to a certain Tony Hawk's series.

Essentially, you get to play as one of nine Simpsons characters, all voiced by the proper actors, and the setting will be recognisable from the show. Otherwise, think Tony Hawk's, but yellow. It's on PS2 and should be out around September time.



Memories of Road Rage make us shudder

DATES

ORES SOON

DATE	TICK BOX	NAME	FORMAT
AUGUST 2	☐	MEDABOTS TYPE A: METABEE	GBA
2	☐	MEDABOTS TYPE A: RUKUSHO	GBA
2	☐	MONSTER JAM MAXIMUM DESTRUCTION	GBA
2	☐	SCOOBY DOO AND THE NIGHT OF 100 FRIGHTS	PS2
2	☐	SLAM TENNIS	PS2/XBX
2	☐	SSX PLATINUM	PS2
2	☐	TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2002	GBA
2	☐	UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2003	PC
2	☐	ZOOCUBE	GC
9	☐	ANIMANIACS: PINKY & THE BRAIN	GBA
9	☐	DELTA FORCE – URBAN WARFARE	PS1
9	☐	FREEKSTYLE	PS2
9	☐	LOST KINGDOMS	GC
9	☐	MANIC MINER	GBA
9	☐	METAL SLUG X	PS1

DATE	TICK BOX	NAME	FORMAT
AUGUST 9	☐	QUAKE 3 GOLD	PC
9	☐	RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN SPECIAL EDITION	PC
9	☐	STARMAGEDDON	PC
9	☐	THE SUM OF ALL FEARS	PC
9	☐	VIP	PS2
2	☐	WWE SMACKDOWN! JUST BRING IT PLATINUM	PS2
9	☐	ZOOCUBE	GBA
16	☐	AQUA AQUA	PS2
16	☐	MONSTER JAM MAXIMUM DESTRUCTION	PS2
19	☐	MAFIA	PC
23	☐	AGGRESSIVE INLINE SKATING	XBX/PS2
23	☐	ARMORED CORE 2 ANOTHER AGE	PS2
23	☐	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER	XBX

CACKMAN

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Or how to blow your money on a load of old rope

Cackman loves cack. Maybe he thought his cynical monthly rant at the latest gaming excrement suggests a distaste for the stuff, but hey, crap pays his salary. Which is why he can't wait for Star Wars: Ultimate Edition.

Oh, haven't you heard? Seems George Lucas hasn't finished updating his original masterpiece. Or as fans like to put it, "when is that bloated sell-out gonna stop arsing about with the Star Wars Trilogy?" Yep, when he's done ruining our childhoods with that glorified Babylon 5 prequel trilogy, he's promising to turn his all-seeing eye back to the original movies to screw them up some more. The brownest nugget being Jimmy 'LA Law' Smits 'inserted' into A New Hope. Topping Special Edition's bug-eyed comedy is Jabba and that 'best rim-pilot' conversation; or check out Smits (who plays roll-necked Bail Organa in Clones). He looks up from peaceful Alderaan as the Death Star homes in and screams "Aaargh no, the Death Star!".

Used to be, it took a bad sequel to ruin a franchise, but now, as the newly re-edited saying goes, if it ain't broke, break it. Which brings us back to the fragrant world of games. Ooh look, it's Solid Snake on a skateboard! Are you as excited as Cackman about the 'special edition' MGS2 Substance, filled with hidden treats? He for one will be buying it.

No, wait a minute, he already has Metal Gear Solid 2. Let some other mug blow his cash so he can laugh at the puny extras. If he sounds cynical, maybe he's had to spend the last few months listening to 'games experts' raving about the awesome Resident Evil on GameCube.

He's not denying it looks astounding. He's utterly convinced there are new puzzles and surprises. He has no doubt it's the same frickin' game he played back in 1996. Is it just Cackman? Has everyone else been replicated by pods? Why are people so damn happy to buy old games? Don't you fancy something new? N-e-w.

"Crazy Taxi 3 features Crazy Taxi 1 and 2 levels! Bok!" Yeah, you moron, you've played them already. "Super Mario World on GBA is the best platform game ever!" Well done, CVG told you that 11 years ago.

GBA is the worst offender. Every month the industry gets wet cos another shabby old 16-bit game is rehashed on the handheld. "Ooh ooh, Super Ghouls 'N' Ghosts and Zelda: A Link To The Past." Go on eBay, you turd. You can pick up a SNES and the originals for £30.

Not since Silent Hill 2: Inner Fear on Xbox has Cackman been this repulsed. It's not the increased terror, more the prospect of facing all-new empty levels filled with... nothing.

He's made his point. If you want to read more, go out and buy the same issue again. Cackman's off to play Sonic. On Master System, Mega Drive, Game Gear, Neo Geo Pocket, Game Boy Advance and Wonderswan.

NEXT MONTH

The same old rant only this time with a never-before-seen paragraph on Jet Set Radio Future and a hilarious joke about Empire Strikes Back: Ultimate Edition, featuring a new musical muppet scene with Yoda and a group of all-singing, all-dancing hamburgers.

Cackman's opinions aren't necessarily those of CVG

PlayStation.2

www.stuntman-game.com

6th September 2002

ATARI

REFLECTIONS

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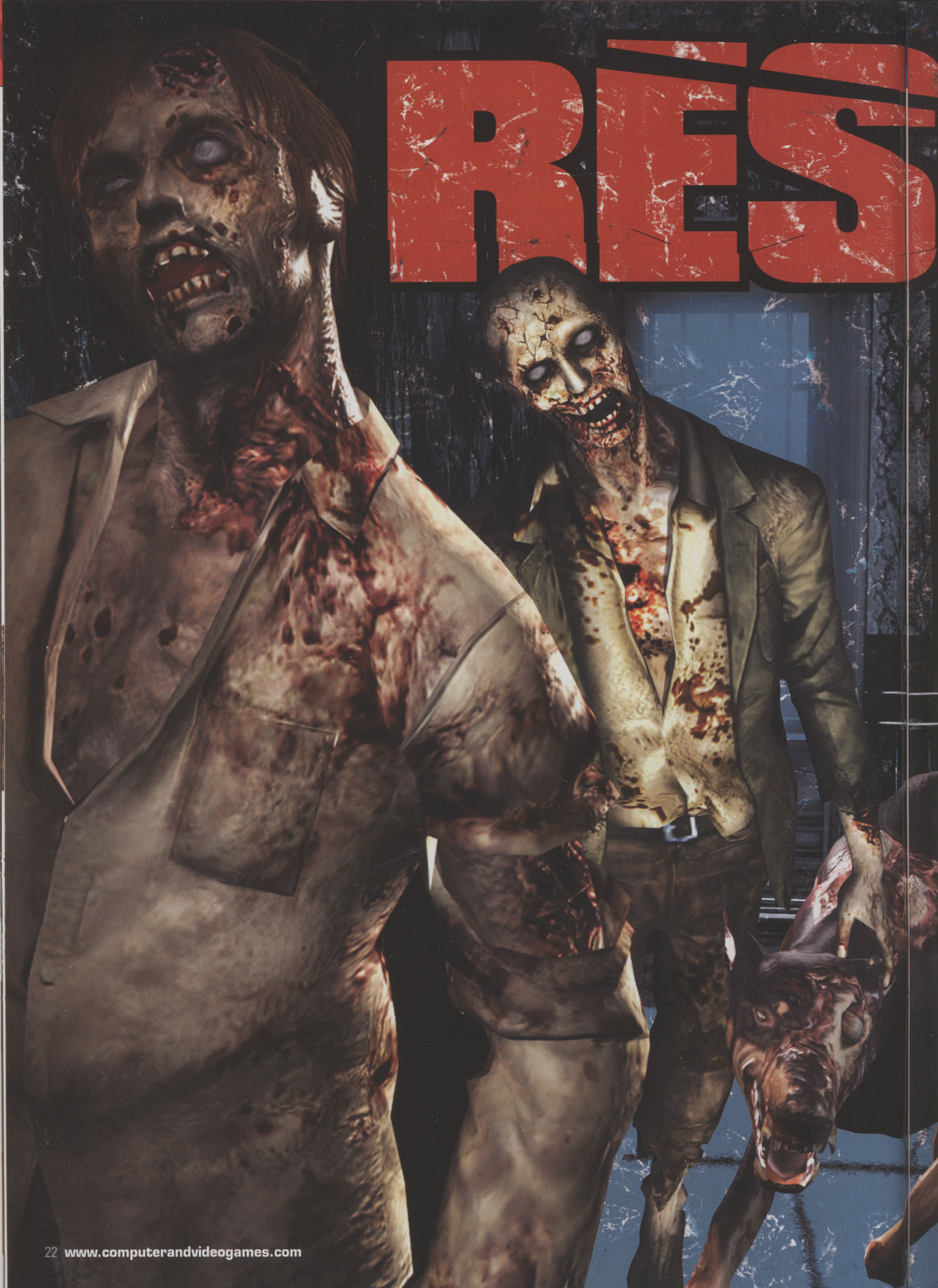
RE5

RESIDENT EVIL

A war against zombies and mutants in all the places you'd least want to meet them. The original survival horror is reborn to begin a new reign of terror

WORDS AND SCREENSHOTS:
MIKE COOPER AND PAUL DAVIES

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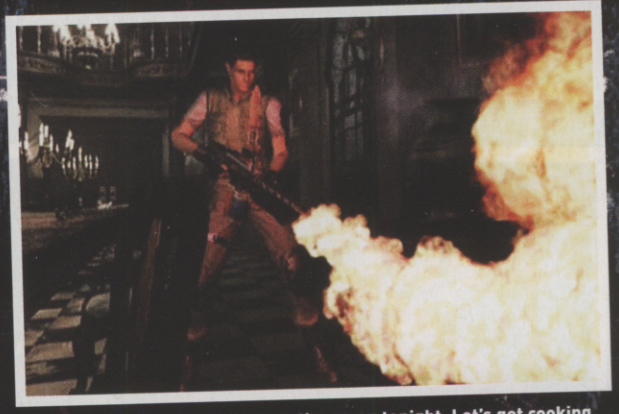
OUT: 13 SEPTEMBER

You meet a hideously disfigured woman in a narrow tunnel with an uncomfortably low ceiling. It seems she has more than one face. Dressed in rags she's hunched over and moaning. Perhaps you ought to help her in some way? Suddenly she lunges and you notice for the first time how her arms are locked in crude wooden stocks, broken chains clanking. She's using them to try to open your skull. In defence you open fire with the biggest gun you have; gore splatters the walls. It's utterly horrific. It's truly great. This is what Resident Evil is all about: ultimate survival horror.



Flame-grilled zombies are on the menu tonight. Let's get cooking

This guy's so ugly, you'd be doing him a favour by ending his misery

REANIMATED

If you're still telling yourself that this is the same old thing regurgitated yet another time, we ask you to open your eyes. The original Res Evil for PlayStation looks no more than a scruffy cartoon alongside the GC update. Perhaps you saw Attack Of The Clones and thought it looked no better than Bob The Builder too?

Back in those days (1996 to be exact) we worshipped Res Evil for its cool looks, but still had to let our imaginations fill in the blanks – similar to the allowances you make when reading a comic book. But even the most fertile mind could not ignore one crucial fact: the in-game action on PSone didn't look geuinely realistic or that convincing.

Now, though, every scene is filled with captivating detail, and the experience is often overwhelming. In fact, it's such a veritable feast for the eyes, you can almost feel them chewing.

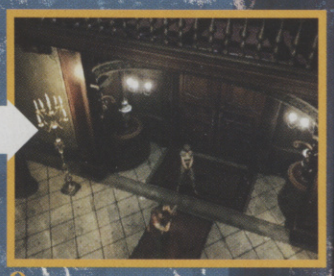
It was always difficult to get grossed out by such blocky visuals

Chris finds some bloody zombie leftovers. This is how it should be done

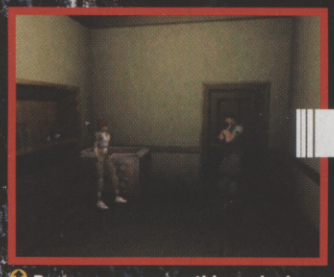
First time round, the dogs were scary. Now they just look crap

The new character animations and interactions are unbelievable on GC

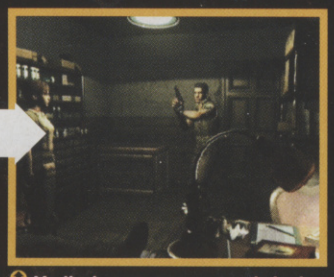
Not exactly the most menacing and imposing room in the mansion...



...But in the GC version you can smell the fear from the very start



Rooms were never this packed with detail in the original adventure



Medical room: games rarely look as good as this. It'll blow your mind

All the areas in the first Resi game were reasonably light...

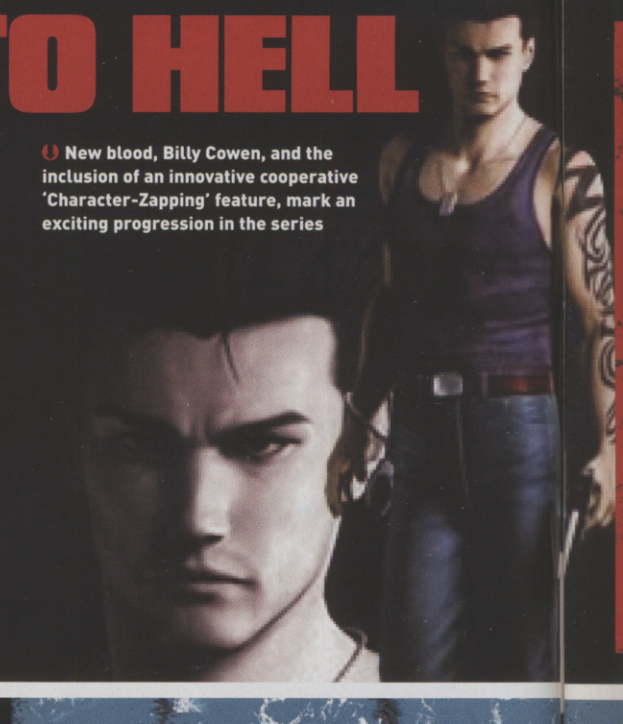
...However, here you're regularly thrown into petrifying darkness

THE PORTAL TO HELL

A strange evil mist is engulfing GameCube. Nintendo's boxy bad boy has been possessed with the spirit of Resi. And it's only just beginning.

For the next few years, Cube is going to be the exclusive host for what's sure to become a historic trio of survival horror titles. The reason Resident Evil 2, Nemesis and Code:Veronica are not in this equation is because they're simply straight ports of the PSone games. But with the awesome-looking Resident Evil o creeping ever closer, and Resident Evil 4 crawling up the pipeline, it's now utterly essential to get your hands on Nintendo's next-gen marvel if you haven't already.

The introduction of new characters, ever more terrifying and gripping plots and deliciously disgusting monsters is guaranteed in the next two Resi titles. And Resident Evil o has already proved Capcom's commitment to pushing the series forward and keeping it fresh, intriguing and gross.



New blood, Billy Cowen, and the inclusion of an innovative cooperative 'Character-Zapping' feature, mark an exciting progression in the series

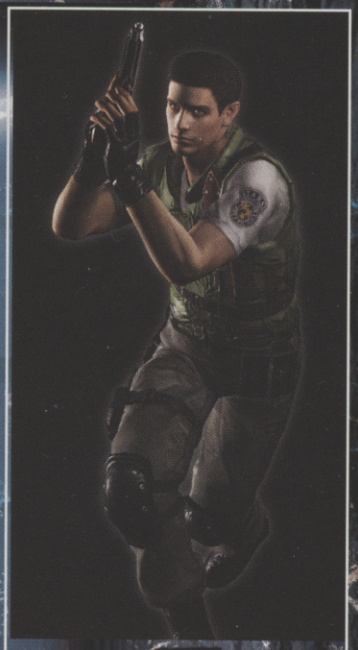
ZOMBIE MEAT

Stepping into the Resident Evil mansion is a bit like diving headfirst into a meat grinder. But no one said that battling against an army of flesh-eating freaks and blood-hungry beasts was going to be a breeze. Bowling into hell are the five core members of Raccoon Police Department's S.T.A.R.S division.

The adventure is split into two main campaigns, which see you choosing between whether to take a tougher challenge in the boots of Chris Redfield, or a slightly less hardcore mission as Jill Valentine. Both story lines intertwine and it's imperative to play as both characters in order to experience different set pieces and to tie the whole story together. The supporting cast consists of burly Barry Burton, the sexy Rebecca Chambers and that shifty bloke in the shadows. Turn over to 'Resident Weasel' for more on the fifth S.T.A.R.S mystery member.

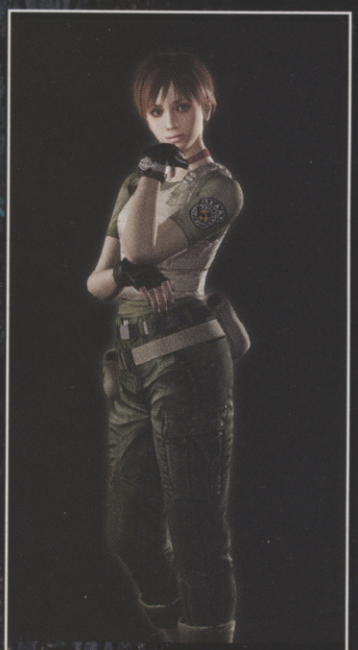
JILL VALENTINE

Fit women shouldn't be subjected to the kinds of horrors that go on in the Resident Evil mansion. But Jill's not scared. Collecting a hefty arsenal of heavy firepower along the way, she's rarely caught short of a weapon with which to unleash chaos



CHRIS REDFIELD

Easily the hardest hombre in the house. Armed with only a blade at the beginning, Chris is a gung-ho hero who knows no fear. And he's so tough that he only feels the need to carry a meagre six items, in contrast to Jill's eight



REBECCA CHAMBERS

You briefly get to take control of Rebecca a few hours into playing the game. And although she only comes into play for a short while, you'll see that her contribution to the overall cause is vital

BARRY BURTON

The beardy-weirdy of the bunch, Barry is a weapons expert who mostly comes into contact with the lovely Ms Valentine on her terrifying travels

THE SCORPION KING

NEW!!!

These new Res Evil 0 screens show off a big-ass scorpion with a problem. You! And if being shot by Rebecca alone wasn't pissing him off enough, you get Billy in on the action too.

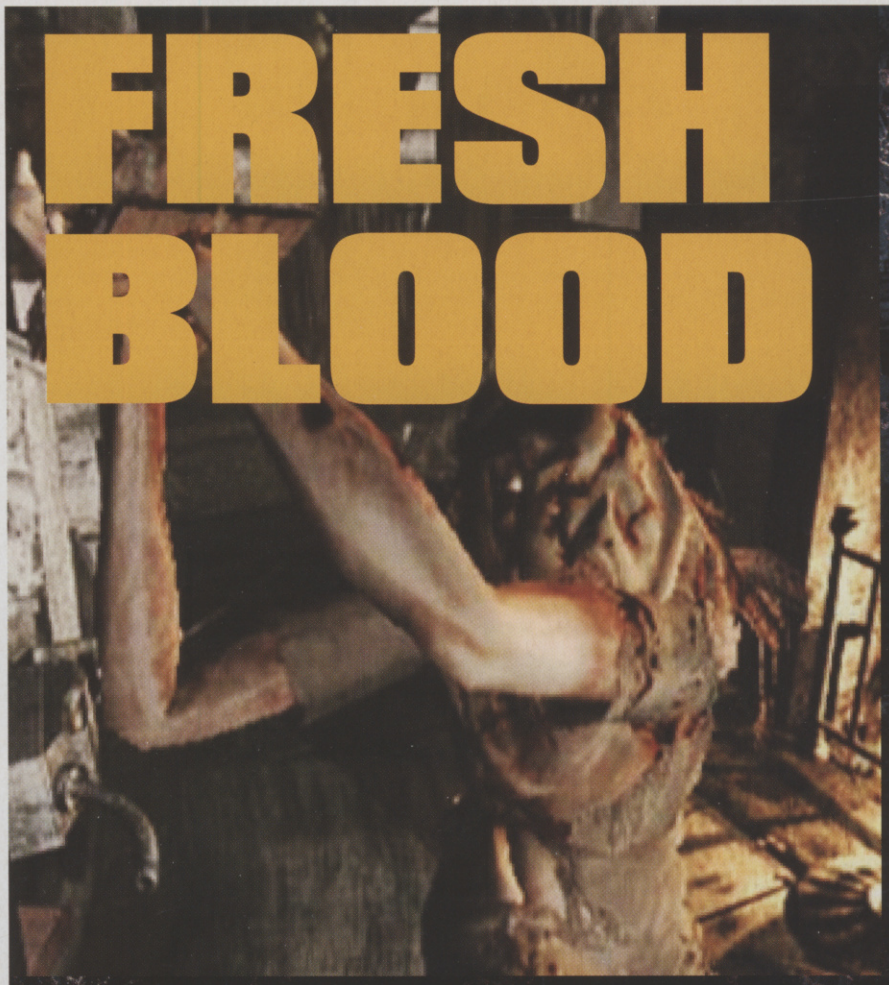
Being able to control two characters simultaneously through the entire adventure suggests that Resident Evil 4 should boast some equally exciting new features. And considering news and details on Capcom's most eagerly awaited Resi game aren't far off, it's time to get excited.

Rebecca realises she might be in trouble...

...But never fear. Billy's nearby to help out

Billy backs off and Rebecca fires the killer shot

FRESH BLOOD

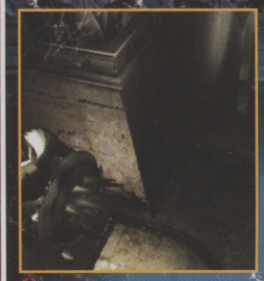


If you're coming to Resident Evil fresh, you won't know what's hit you. But for those of you that survived the PSone original, Capcom has made sure that this remake is packed with enough surprises and changes that you'll still fill your breeches every step of the way.

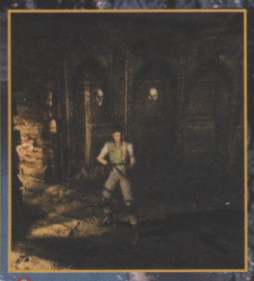
This GameCube incarnation hurls you into a nightmare world that looks scarier and feels more atmospheric than that of almost any movie. But Resident Evil's shock factor is borne from the introduction of new terrifyingly unpredictable moments staggered throughout the adventure. These have been built in to scare the pants off both newcomers and fans of the original. And on top of all the scares, there are extra areas to explore, new puzzles to solve and creatures to confront. Step into the unknown.

EAT MY BRAIN

Seventy per cent of the puzzles in Resi on Cube have been altered, and a few major new brain-busters have been added. Now there's an important mystery involving a dog whistle, a riddle with moving walls and mechanical blade-wielding knights, and a curious mask-fitting exercise – to name but a few.

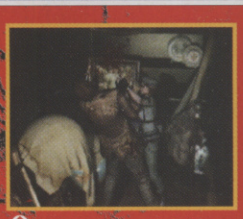


Beware of the knight with a spiky spinning shield



Four disfigured faces stare into your soul

BLOW MY MIND

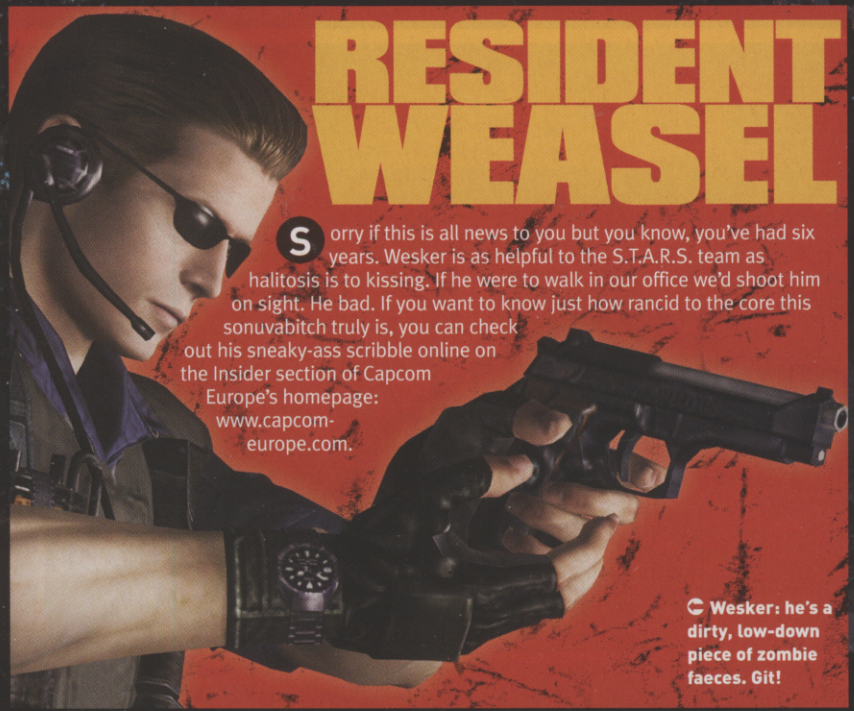


Jill plunges a defence dagger into his eye. Urgh!

Defence weapons play a huge part in the newly refined gameplay of Resident Evil. These weapons are scattered and hidden throughout the game, and your character will automatically defend themselves with whatever weapon they're equipped with at the time. This is extremely helpful when battling tougher enemies. Instead of wasting loads of ammo, the likes of a Flash Napalm grenade can dispose of most regular creatures in one big bang.

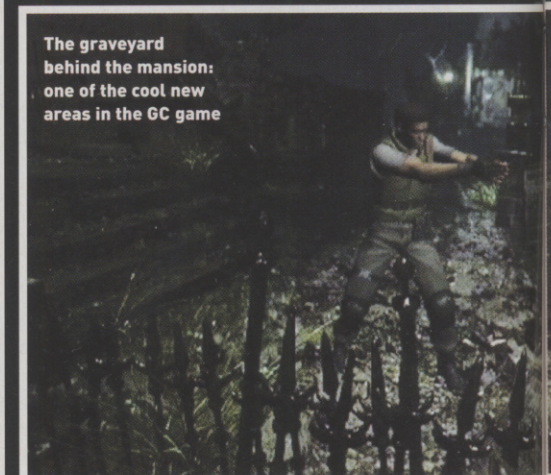
A Flash Napalm grenade in the gob does the job well

RESIDENT WEASEL



Sorry if this is all news to you but you know, you've had six years. Wesker is as helpful to the S.T.A.R.S. team as halitosis is to kissing. If he were to walk in our office we'd shoot him on sight. He bad. If you want to know just how rancid to the core this sonuvabitch truly is, you can check out his sneaky-ass scribble online on the Insider section of Capcom Europe's homepage: www.capcom-europe.com.

Wesker: he's a dirty, low-down piece of zombie faeces. Git!

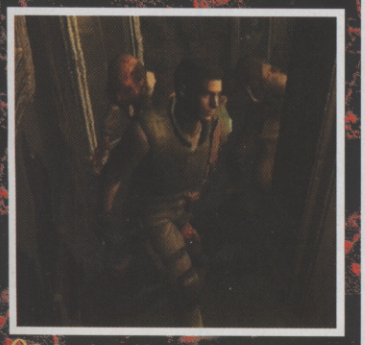


The graveyard behind the mansion: one of the cool new areas in the GC game

SOMETHING SMELLS GOOD

One of the big surprises reveals itself a few hours into the game, when zombies get up off the floor and start *running* at you. And not only are these hungry freaks able to match you for pace, they now take giant swipes at your jugular with huge claws. However, the new kerosene-filled Fuel Canteen item enables you to strategically burn zombies while they're lying on the ground. But you've got to be quick or they'll lurch up and sink their rotten teeth into you.

Chris shows off his cooking skills. Set them alight with your Fuel Canteen



Being chased by running zombies is a real heart-stopping experience

THE BADLANDS

The basic structure and layout of the adventure is very similar to the PSone original. There are however loads of new areas, rooms, doors, windows and extra details this time round.

It's essential to explore every inch of all the locations or you'll be sure to miss something vitally important – and you won't want that.

DO NOT FEED

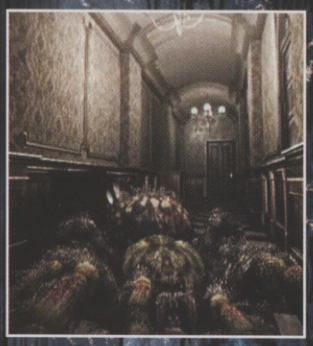
None of the mind-mashed creatures in Resident Evil sit back passively and wait for you to hurt 'em. These suckers are hungry for your blood and they're not at all afraid to come and get it. So it's best to learn effective ways for dealing with pesky attackers.

ZOMBIE: Pump a couple of pistol rounds into the chest, edge back up a bit so you're not within their reach, then blast off a few more

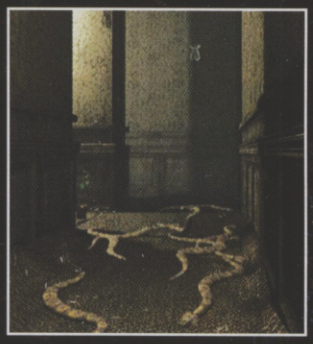
CERBERUS: Whip out the shotgun and blast off a couple of cartridges as it runs towards you. Then aim down and shoot, just as it's about to bite your arm

KILLER BEES: Save your ammo. Attack is the best form of defence. Simply run through the area where they are, and don't stop

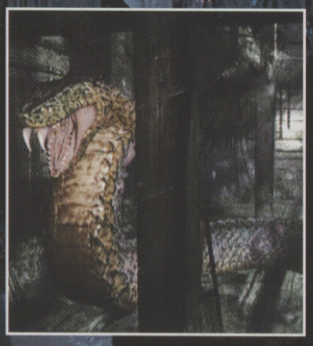
HUNTER: Hunters are the game's most agile enemies. Only attack when you know they're not about to strike. A Magnum bullet will drop them instantly



GIANT SPIDER: When they raise their front legs, get out of the way, because they're either about to spit acid or run at you. Dodge, then fire!



SNAKES: They're tough to spot, so keep an ear out for their hissing. When you see snakes, just run like hell – if you stop, you'll get bitten



GIANT SNAKE: This slithery momma will try to trap you with its enormous coiling body. Don't let it. Don't stop moving and fire at it whenever you get a moment

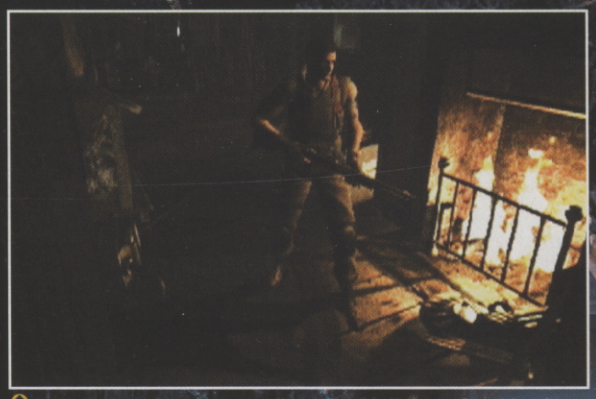
CHIMERA: These nippy locust-like freaks are best kept in line with a couple of sharp blasts from your trusty shotgun or Magnum

NEPTUNE: The sharks in the Aqua Ring are some of the most terrifying and ruthless beasts. There's only one way to survive. Run!

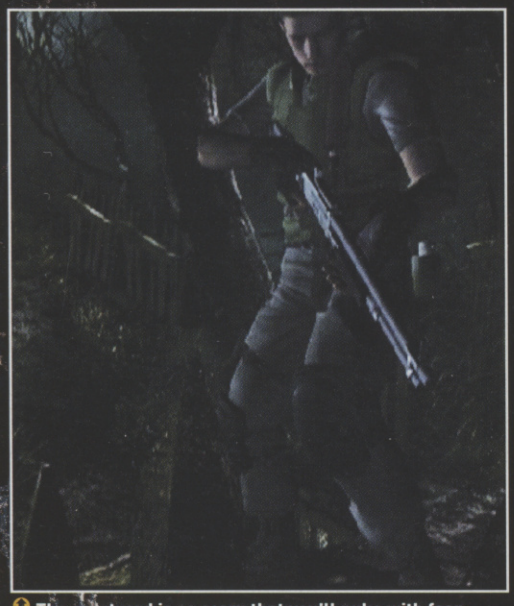
CROWS: They're the least aggressive creatures. But if you shoot one, all their mates will swoop down and peck the crap out of you. Avoid!

GET OUT!

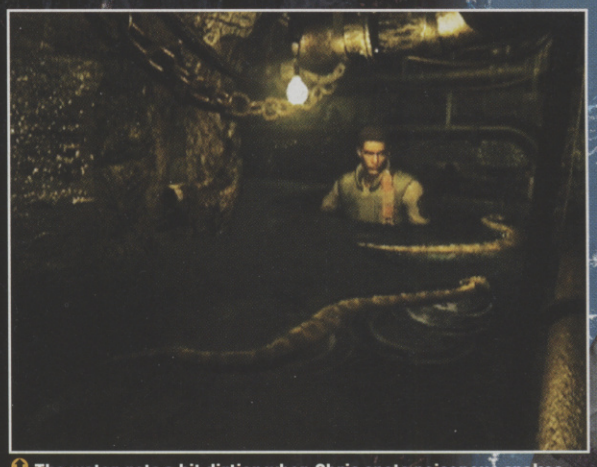
Occasionally (well, in our case, a lot) you stumble upon places in Res Evil that you wish didn't have to be so rotten spooky. Just standing there makes your skin like a frozen chicken's, and your mouth hang open like you're waiting for a spider to make a web over the hole. Here are some snaps we took before getting the hell out of there, fearing for our sphincters.



Don't be fooled by the warm fireplace. Resi's heart is cold as ice



The courtyard is so scary that you'll puke with fear



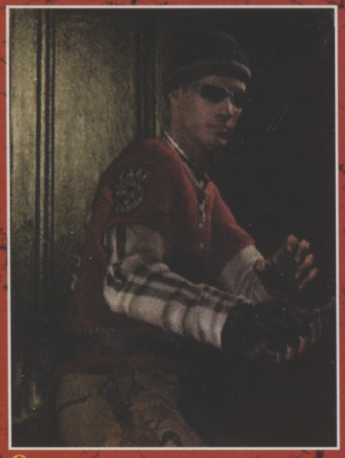
The water gets a bit dirtier when Chris spots poisonous snakes

A new type of fear makes itself known the first time you play a Res Evil game, as any aficionado will tell you. We're all used to the idea now, but when the original first came along it was something you couldn't stop talking about: the bit with the dog, the bit where your team mate 'turns', when you realise It's Wesker... an unforgettable experience. It's different to a movie or a book because you need your own wits to survive alongside Chris and Jill.

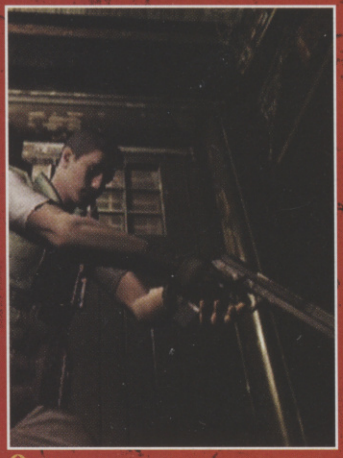
Fear in Res Evil is not something you have to think about, it's something you can't avoid feeling. You must be lacking in emotional faculties if the atmosphere doesn't get to you and you aren't genuinely shaken. This is largely because Capcom masterfully has you in suspense every time you sit down to play. You're guaranteed a nervous ride from start to finish with a rare game that has you awake at night, hyper from terror-induced adrenalin.

GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT

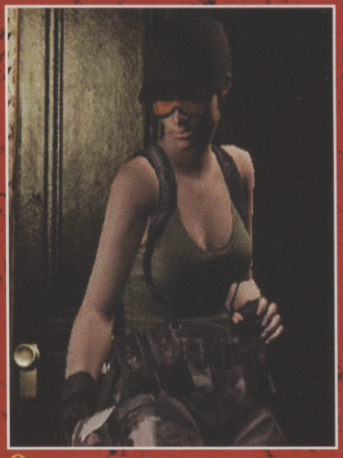
Similar to those wretched fools in Hellraiser movies lured by the Chinese puzzle box, so you become tempted by the treasures of Res Evil. Dare to play through the game more than once and uncommonly cool extras are awarded. You need to play through at least twice to experience the story from both Chris and Jill's perspective (and to prove your worth to CVG, of course). Beyond that, completing the game on the tougher difficulty settings and/or within stricter time limits opens up new costumes and even more challenging scenarios for you to savour.



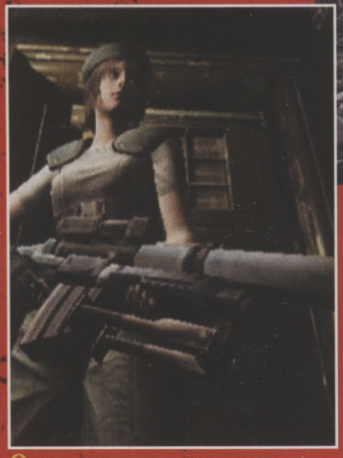
Chris kitted out with an Eminem-stylee ensemble. Chk, chk, waa!



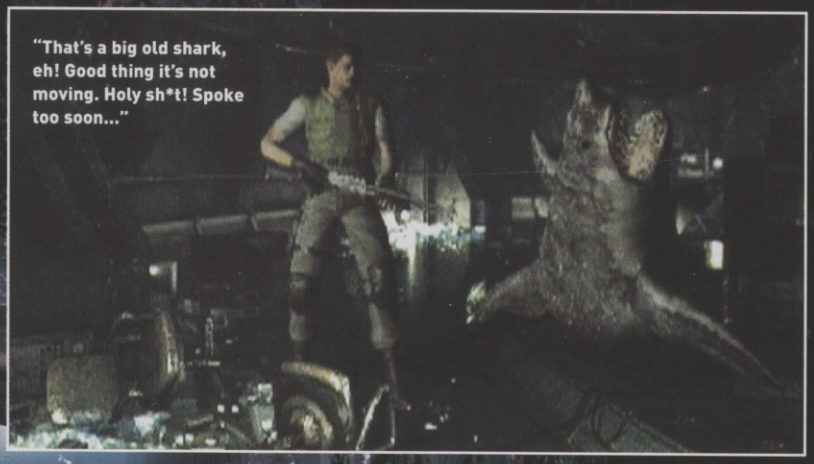
This pistol's so big, there's hardly enough room to fit it in the picture



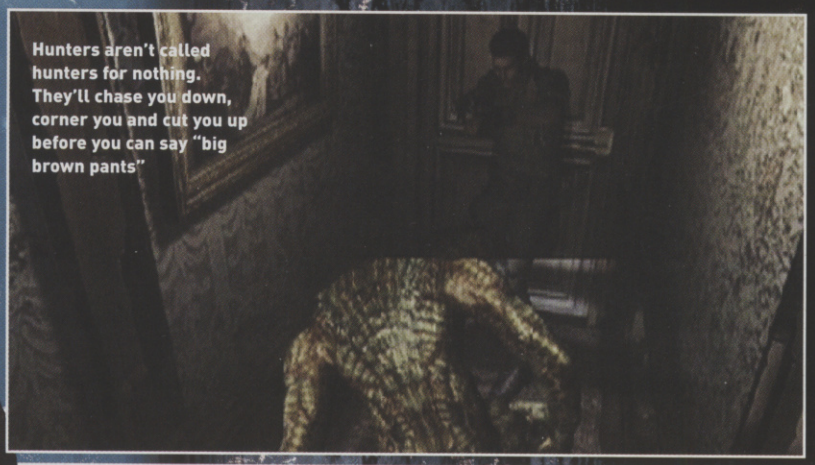
G.I. Jill: The wonderful Ms Valentine dresses to kill. Mmm



Jill likes them big, hard and shiny. But this is ridiculous. Greedy cow



"That's a big old shark, eh! Good thing it's not moving. Holy sh*t! Spoke too soon..."



Hunters aren't called hunters for nothing. They'll chase you down, corner you and cut you up before you can say "big brown pants"

NAPPY FILLERS

You might want to pretend to your mates that Res Evil doesn't really scare you. But we know it does, because it's scary. And just to prove how well Capcom knows what traumatises the bubbling crap out of you, here are some moments that'll have you running for the bathroom.

Chimeras scuttle out of vents and jump up on you from behind

Every time a dog attacks, you'll wish the nightmare would stop

Perhaps just like you, the CVG team was apprehensive about this remake. Were we prepared to play the same game all over again just to admire prettier graphics? Would we feel obliged to congratulate Capcom on a job well done, but feel kind of cheated? We have to admit that on both accounts we were unprepared for the complete overhaul that resulted in this gripping new adventure. The additional content isn't just bolted on – it's integrated into the whole structure of the game, deeply enriching the story.

The classic Res Evil formula of ghouls versus ammo has yet to find an equal, and you'd be truly foolish indded to miss this opportunity to revisit the place where it all started. It's a tough call, but we'd narrowly place GC Res Evil as the best in the series for chilling terror. Just as Aliens is the great action flick but you always go back to Alien for the fear.

It's not often we'll say this, but GC Res Evil is a game worth buying a console to play.

WRETCH-O-MATIC

You can handle the shocks, solve the puzzles, but can you stomach the gore? To become a fully-fledged member of the Res Evil survivors we challenge you not to flinch, not even twitch a muscle on your face as heads explode, ghouls puke and blood pours from between the chattering teeth of a zombie. It's just horrible, all of it.

"This week I'll mostly be eatin' flesh and bones"

CVG RECKONS

Capcom's killer reworking of the PSone classic oozes atmosphere out of every bleeding orifice. A revamped masterpiece that's everything the original wanted to be, and so much more. The best reason yet for owning a GameCube. **Mike**

ESSENTIAL CVG ESSENTIAL

GOOD
– The most amazing looking game on GameCube
– Loads of new puzzles, places, and extra surprises
– Totally thrilling and scary as hell

BAD
– Although the backgrounds are stunning, they're still pre-rendered

9

SNEAK-PEEK OF THE LATEST AND HOTTEST GAMES

PREVIEWS

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **AUTUMN** DEVELOPER: **ARTOON** PUBLISHER: **MICROSOFT**

Blinx, armed with a mean Timesweeper sucking machine, heads off to hoover up ammunition

Every level is packed with utterly bizarre-looking enemies. Just look at this plunger-faced weirdo!

BLINX: THE TIMESWEEPER

Finally Xbox's hard disk proves itself to be more than just an enormous memory card. By recording all your on-screen shenanigans it holds the key to Blinx's innovative time-bending gameplay. Fact is, Microsoft's debut platformer offers an experience that can't be mimicked on either of the other next-gen consoles.

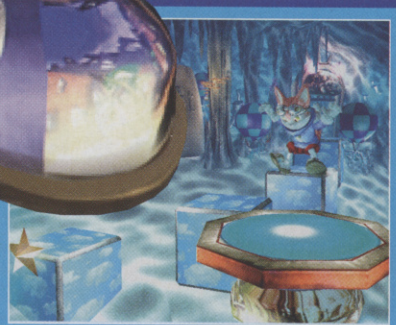
Microsoft's ginger hairball hero is blessed with the ability to manipulate time. Imagine being able to fast-forward to find out next week's Lotto numbers, or freeze time when the big-boobed girl from the video shop bends over to pick up a tape!

But Blinx is far too noble to use his talents for perverse personal gain. Instead, he applies his skills to solving puzzles, negotiating impossible terrain and killing enemies in a glorious-looking 3D platform adventure.

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

A massive, fat, frog-like boss character appears and starts stomping towards you. Everything you fire at him he just seems to gobble up and spit back out. And there's no way to get behind the giant slimeball because he's too damn quick. Time for plan B.

You bring up the panel of time-shifting controls and select the record button. For about ten seconds all your



Leap around and collect three of the same icons to unlock a time-bending button

Now you can rewind, fast-forward, pause, record and make time move in slo-mo

THE MAGIC NUMBER

Collect three same-coloured gems consecutively to unlock the use of the corresponding time-bending button. You can only use that specific ability once so you need to gather as many sets of gems as possible in order to have all the buttons.

CAT CHAT

CVG recently met up with Blinx in his plush Hollywood apartment and threw a few questions at Microsoft's new golden puss. Here's that red-hot interview in full.

CVG: So, Blinx, how did you land this prestigious job?

BLINX: I saw an ad saying 'Crazy cat with mad skills needed for original Microsoft platform adventure!' So I applied for the gig, got an interview and showed them my unique ability to mess around with the space-time continuum. The rest is history.

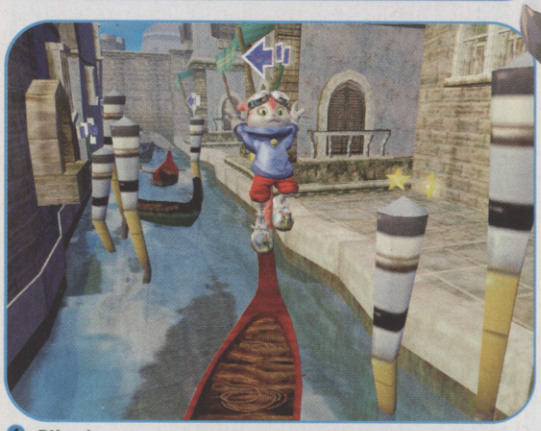
CVG: Being able to pause, record, fast-forward, rewind and make time move in slow motion is a pretty unusual gift. Have you got any other cool tricks you can tell us about?

BLINX: Well, I can do a pretty funky double jump with a somersault tuck. And this thing here that I'm holding is a Timesweeper. It's pretty handy in lots of ways. I can suck up almost any object with it, like grand pianos and gigantic boulders, and then I can fire them back out at enemies. It's a lot of fun, and it's upgradeable too.

CVG: Impressive! Thanks for taking time out to talk to us, and good luck with the game.

BLINX: It was a pleasure. Love the mag, by the way.

The sheer level of detail is truly astounding. Up close you can see every hair on his ginger body. Nice



Blinx is packed with awesome effects. When you pause time, the water turns to jelly

Classic platform-style action. Dodge the swinging pendulum of doom, or you're cat food

actions are recorded. During this time you let the angry amphibian chase you, making sure you remember your movements. When the ten seconds are up, the action rewinds to when you initially hit the record button; this is where the clever stuff happens.

The boss follows the ghost Blinx character you just recorded, enabling you to predict his movements, run around him and shoot him from behind with an object from your Timesweeper. Problem solved.

I'M GONNA GIT YOU, SUKKA!

Blinx's Timesweeper is a bit like Luigi's hoover, only instead of vacuuming ghosts, he can suck up near enough any inanimate object that isn't bolted to the floor. You can store a fair amount of bizarre ammunition inside, so suck up as much as you can on your travels, as you never know when you'll need to unleash a burst of fire on a bunch of weird-ass enemies.

You can pick up cash, too, in the form of gold shapes scattered throughout levels. These can be used to upgrade your Timesweeper so that you can suck up bigger objects – important as there are certain areas that can't be accessed until you've got a powerful enough sucker.

KEEP A CAT'S EYE OUT FOR THIS ONE

All the classic platform game elements are here. Quick reactions and a high level of precision jumping and enemy-bashing prowess are a must in order to progress from stage to stage.

But although there's tons of top-class platform action in here, playing with time to overcome situations is really where Blinx separates itself as something unique in the platforming realm. What's also great is the fact that the time-shifting gameplay feels very flexible, as there are often a number of ways to tackle a challenge.

Cynics and sourpusses will no doubt try to label Blinx as a one-trick pony, but considering it's blessed with stunning visuals and some brilliant action, CVG thinks this cat could pounce into the platform game big leagues when it's released later this year.

Empty the contents of your Timesweeper in his cute face

The first boss character is a bloated, bouncy, balloon-like creature with an enormous bulbous mallet. What a twat!

Make sure that you've hunted down and killed every enemy. If you don't, you won't be able to exit that stage

CVG RECKONS

The time-twisting feature is very impressive and innovative. And considering the in-game action is a lot of fun, Microsoft's fantastic-looking platform game could put Cheshire Cat-sized grins on the faces of all jump-happy Xbox owners. **Mike**

PRO EVOLUTION S

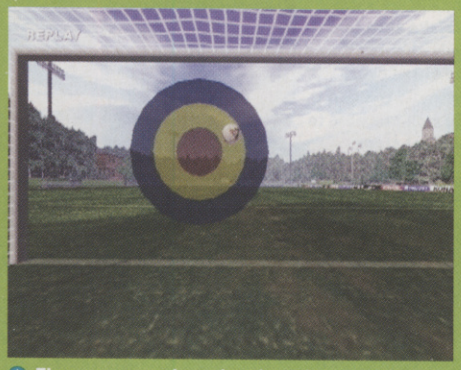
FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **KONAMI** PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

BEND IT LIKE BECKHAM

The set piece controls have been given a thorough overhaul for Pro Evolution Soccer 2. As a result, you can now really whip in corners and, more significantly, any free kick from 35 yards or closer presents a real chance to score – no excuses to mess up. The game even trains you to bend the ball, in a class target-shooting mini-game.

Select your free-kick taker (we chose Beckham) and line up the shot. Over or around the wall?

When you're happy, let fly. From that range you want about half-power. Add swerve with the Dpad



The reverse-angle replay shows how you did. You couldn't have been that accurate in the last game

Now the World Cup's out of the way, we can start to get excited about the *real* football event of 2002. The sequel to Konami's stunning Pro Evolution Soccer hits in October, and CVG's been out scouting on the training pitch to see what's new.

For a start, you'd be hard pressed to spot any visual changes in the screens here from the old version. However, a stack of the less famous players have had their faces modelled more effectively, and there are six new stadia. Player animation is slightly more fluid too, with key men like Beckham benefiting from their own specific animations. Players flick out a foot to block crosses and pull each other's shirts. Crowd sounds are much improved, and you can hear When The Saints Go Marching In when England play, which is mint.

Argentina, pretending that they can actually win a game

They've got some decent commentators this time: Jon Champion and Mark Lawrenson

MORE DRIBBLE

Gameplay will continue to be tweaked up until release, but PES 2 is already a more fluid game. Players are better at dribbling, so there's more opportunity for flair play. Matches get less bogged down in the midfield, and it feels more fun. Enhanced set-piece plays give you a good chance of scoring from free kicks, and there are a couple of new dribble tricks.

Ease off run completely and your player shuffles behind the ball, ready to turn super-sharply when a challenge comes in. The old 'shimmy' command when doing the slower dash is also more useful than before. Passes and shots are now visibly flicked with the outside of the player's boot.

Man United's Old Trafford is featured among the six new stadia in the game

Pick that out, goalie! Gotta love that in-goal camera view

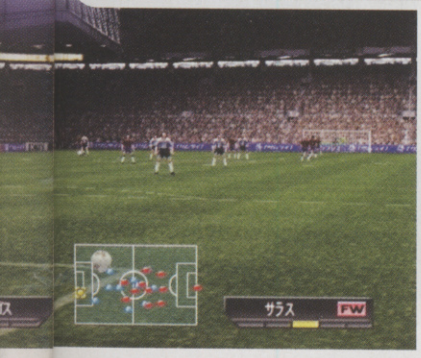
Like in previous games, you're best to zoom right out with the view. Helps with your visionary passing game

Oh get up you big bloody baby! It's a man's game! I hardly touched you!

The new set-play power bar helps you whip corners in dangerously too

S OCCER 2

The replays are still a bit too short to show a complex build-up



Look at that badge! You can even edit your club crest in Master League

No change in the penalty system

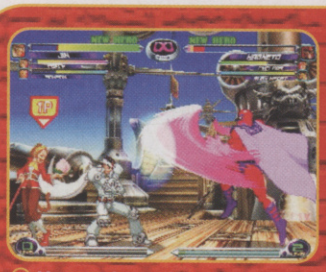
Dirty Lizarazu. But that's the French for you. Can't play nice at all

Aston Villa fans will be pleased to note their team lines up among the club sides, and the Master League itself gets an overhaul. There are now three divisions instead of two, and you can loan in players as well as buy them outright. Each league gets a cup competition too.

There are also skills tutorials that can be played again and again for high scores: slalom through cones against the clock and play cheeky possession football on the edge of your own area. The free kick targeting is coolest of all – you'll see when you play it.

CVG RECKONS

It's still early days, but this version already improves on what is arguably the most thrilling game on PS2. **Dean**



Magneto is usually pretty scary, but he's made to look a fool here

It's never much fun being on the receiving end of a combined attack!

FORMAT: **PS2/XBOX** OUT: **NOVEMBER**
DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM EUROSOFT**

MARVEL VS CAPCOM 2: NEW AGE OF HEROES

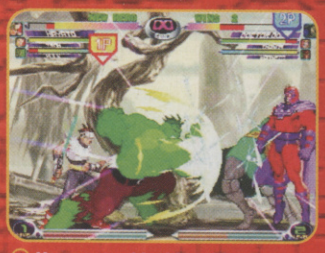
This manic fight-a-thon has a 55-strong line-up, including flavour of the month, Spider-Man.

Now bound for PS2 *and* Xbox, MVC2 is guaranteed the audience it deserves. Sure, it's old skool, but it's cool and will have the power to blow you away.

In 1994 Capcom tore up its Street Fighter rule book and gave birth to X-Men: Children Of The Atom. Almost a decade later we remain totally shell-shocked by combos which took place 20-foot high and rising, in locations suffering as much damage as the fighters within them.

While Capcom continued to honour fans of more traditional play with the Street Fighter series, the trend of OTT fighting developed alongside, reaching its zenith in Marvel Versus Capcom 2. It's so accomplished in fact, that players from all fighting backgrounds respect it. And you, CVG reader, should be gagging for it.

You can even play as Jill Valentine



You can try blocking this move from Hulk, but you'll take damage

The likes of Magneto get trashed by ridiculous characters like Tron!

Marvel's hottest superhero webs up '80s Capcom icon, Strider Hyru

CVG RECKONS

Great characters and stunning special attacks. Kicking the crap out of Ryu with Spider-Man is fine! **Paul**

Some weapons or tools can be manipulated using a first-person view

Gliding, high jumps and stuff require slightly trickier control but are fun to master

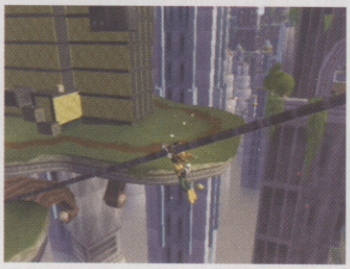
RATCHET AND CLANK

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **WINTER** DEVELOPER: **INSOMNIAC GAMES** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

Spend too long in the company of these guys and you'll wind up with more than a screw loose. This bends your fingers and your brain!

After the joy of Jak And Daxter, we're keeping a close eye on this latest PS2 platformer. With more time to tinker with Ratchet And Clank's workings, we've discovered more of the good and bad in store.

It isn't due until just before Christmas, so it isn't so polished yet: there are some awkward camera angles, and access to places you're clearly not intended to go. But our wisdom tells us to look on the positive side. Here's what we think you'll enjoy the most.



It's easy to death slide, but it's a long way back, so don't be hasty

You'll feel dwarfed by the huge locations, so this map will come in handy

Ratchet gets to handle 35 different types of weapon

WORK IT OUT, WISE GUY

At this stage of play what CVG is finding most impressive is the personality worked into even the minor bad guys. Though we've only encountered a few basic types so far, the robot dogs, whose robot masters order them to attack, make a tricky team that's fun to overcome. Similarly, the cowardly little guy who runs away while dropping mines is a nice touch. Enemy behaviour counts for a lot in this game, and you can use it against them to find the best way of knocking them out. Very clever indeed. We like.

CLANK THE COOL

Whatever we come to think of the game overall, our opinion is now set fast on one thing: Clank is ace. You'll like him a lot. Ratchet's portable pal is the perfect straight man to Ratchet's go-getting nature, rather like Jackie Chan's relationship with Chris Tucker in the Rush Hour movies. As you may already know, Clank, being a robot, receives upgrades to enhance his performance at Big Al's Robo Shack. While he's being operated on it sounds like it could be painful, and when you see the results – goofy rotors on his head and hands, for example – it'll crack you up.

Convenience stores on this planet are super-efficient

CVG RECKONS

Contains many typical platform game scenarios, but there are enough high-tech modifications installed to elevate it well beyond mediocrity. Paul

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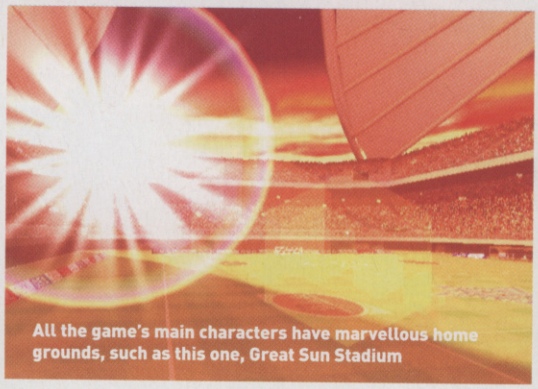
DISNEY SPORTS SOCCER

FORMAT: **GAMECUBE** OUT: **AUTUMN** DEVELOPER: **KONAMI OSA** PUBLISHER: **KONAMI**

This menagerie of Disney stars sees footie as another excuse for some magic-infused mayhem.

How would you feel about 'ISS in the Magical Kingdom' or 'My First Pro Evolution'? A massively simplified then uproariously glorified vision of football, where Michael Owen makes way for Mickey Mouse, Ronaldo for Donald Duck? Disney Sports Soccer may not please the purist, but within the context of videogames we're prepared to give it a match or two.



All the game's main characters have marvellous home grounds, such as this one, Great Sun Stadium

Scorchio! There's just no stopping super-hot shots like this one, encased in glowing flames. Ouch!

Daisy Duck casts some kind of spell to boost his skills for a while

IT'S DISNEY, WHAT DID YOU EXPECT?

And so the sport we lovingly named football has been stuffed into fluffy animal suits and given fluffier names. But it's fun, funny and features a surprisingly broad range of moves, accessible from just three buttons. The A button shoots or slide tackles, B passes or tries for a basic tackle. To modify any of these moves, press the R trigger – to chip at the ball or try to loop it into the net from a distance. There seem to be loads more special moves available, depending on when you press either button in relation to the ball position. We've seen cool bicycle kicks and diving headers. If you time things right, some players can hit the ball so hard it goes like a rocket, trailing fire and smoke... good gawd!

A well-placed through ball, magically enhanced, gives the SpaceNicks a chance...

Minnie tries to charm the opposition, but we're not falling for it!

Hey, this chicken ought to be more careful – unless he wants to be sent off for a fowl. (Sorry)

Availability of crazier grounds is based on the amount of match points earned

MO' DISNEY SPO' ACKSHUN!

Soccer isn't the only sport to receive the Disney treatment. Konami has Game Boy Advance and GameCube versions of American football, basketball, skateboarding and snowboarding, all due for the end of this year. We hope to have played them all in time for a round-up next issue.

FOOTBALL (GBA)

BASKETBALL (GC)

SOCCER (GBA)

SOCCER (GC)

SKATEBOARDING (GBA)

FOOTBALL (GC)

SKATEBOARDING (GC)

Donald is the star player for the Seaducks team. He's very fast but gets flustered easily

There are seven teams to choose from at the start, including an all-star crew captained by Mickey Mouse. Team names reflect the personalities on the squad – the infamous Donald Duck plays for the Seaducks; Big Bad Pete roughs it up with the Steamrollers; Minnie Mouse captains the Charmers; you get the idea...

Each team's overall performance is measured in terms of Speed, Power and Technique and is a solid indication of how to play them. It's okay for starters, but later on you'll need to spend points earned in matches and customise individual players to help balance out the side.

Mickey winds up his power shot to beat off three Dalmatian defenders

PRIMARY-COLOURED ANORAK

Since it's a safe bet that you're drawn to this because it's Disney, you'll be pleased to find there are loads of secrets in store. Well, we haven't found any just yet, but we know they exist because of something called the Shoes Album in the Collection menu, with 40 question marks to uncover. What could they be? (Most likely other famous Disney characters to build the ultimate team.) We'll find out exactly what's in store in time for next issue.

CVG RECKONS

Gimmicks won't make us Brits enjoy football more than we do already, but we suspect that this one will grab your attention. Paul

A good performance in freestyle mode helps sharpen your skills for the races

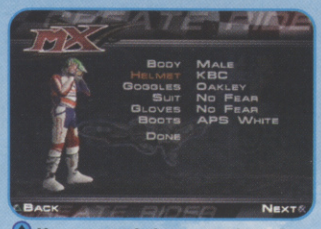
MX SUPERFLY

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **PACIFIC COAST** PUBLISHER: **THQ**

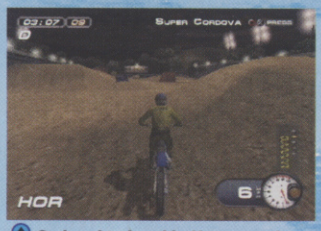
If you want the full-blown US motocross experience, this is the closest you'll get, short of flying to Binghamton, NY.

There are a couple of sure-fire ways to make a hit extreme sports game. Option One is to copy EA's SSX, but with EA doing lots of this already, you're left with Option Two: borrow from Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. There's also a little-known Option Three for those of you who are really cunning: Nintendo's Excite Bike 64 – the second game in history to make riding motocross bikes fun (the first was the original Excite Bike for NES in '84).

In EB64 you race, and perform stunts, but – bizarrely – there are no stripes to show you where to jump, and no goofy boost meter. Somehow it survives off great control and a tangible sense of competition.



Your created player can dress in authentic officially branded bike gear



Go head to head in Horse mode – it's always a fun challenge

The benefit of racing outdoors is the terrific views

PRO EXCITE BIKE PS2

What Pacific Coast has created here is a THPS/EB64 hybrid, benefiting from a Ricky Carmichael endorsement. Ricky's joined by 26 other real-life riders across 25 real-life circuits, both indoor and outdoor. Like we said, authentic.

In addition to flat-out racing, there's a freestyle mode for pure tricks. There's a career mode too – create a rider and see him (or her) through all the tournaments for better bikes and branded bike gear.

CVG RECKONS

A more serious alternative to the exhilarating Freekstyle (reviewed page 94), and thrilling in its own right. **Paul**

MALICE

FORMAT: **PS2/XBOX** OUT: **AUTUMN** DEVELOPER: **ARGONAUT** PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**

You think you see a cute kid with a mallet, but what you're actually looking at is a deity. Malice is full of surprises like that.

After being touted as one of the First Big Things on Xbox, Malice has since been given joint billing on PS2. It's too early to judge which is best though, because neither version is close to being finished at the time of writing. Ultimately, all we care about, though, is the game, so let's break it down.

FAR-FETCHED AND THEN SOME

You play the game's eponymous heroine, a fiery teenage girl named Malice. Things start badly; in fact you join her right at the point that she's just been killed and is fighting for her soul in the underworld. And then it gets crazier.

During the course of the game, Malice discovers that she is a deity who will one day save the world. But first she must regain all the powers she lost at the time of her passing over to the other side. See, she wasn't actually dead, just transferred to another plane by an evil adversary, the Fire God. It's complicated, suffice to say that the rest of the game is dedicated to piecing the universe back together, and restoring Malice's power for a significant rematch.

Use elemental power to protect Malice and increase her strength

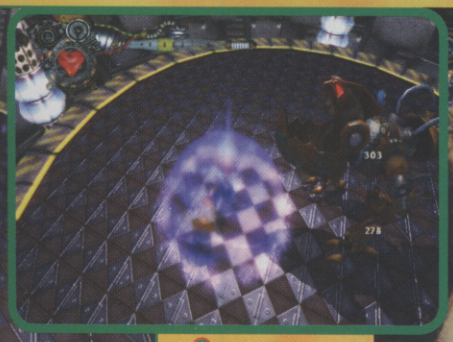
Malice is sent to the underworld if she suffers too much damage

This could pass as a remix of No Doubt's 'Hella Good' video

Don't go thinking that a scrappy piece of wood is going to do much against this feller

Whack away the pillars to prepare a route across the water

Take flight using the Mace of Clubs



Water magic causes damage to mechanical enemies, rusting their nuts

Wait a minute, isn't this a lot like that tree in Ocarina Of Time?

Boss enemies have multiple hit points. Go for the weakest first

The skeletal dude with the quill is everyone's favourite comedian: death

UNDER THE COSH

On the Xbox version we played, the most striking feature of the game is the colossal nature of the world surrounding Malice. It kicks off at The Orrery, a time machine that controls the universe. Malice must figure out its workings so she can travel back and forth through time. The place is immense and complex, with giant cogs and other treacherous moving parts.

Still giant, but also hugely contrasting in style, is the Dying Siren Tree, with beautifully rendered natural surroundings and a more spiritual quest at hand. Though at first everything seems quite disparate, it's all held together by elemental themes where puzzles are based on the scissors-paper-stone relationships of Earth, Air, Fire, Water and Metal.

Even when you're this high up, the world below can be seen in full

THE CLUBBER'S GUIDE

Malice totes three varieties of bizarre defensive tool in the game. From what we've played they seem to be location-specific. The Mace of Clubs is the most defensive weapon, the kind of thing you'd expect Link to use in a Zelda game. It sprouts leaves to help Malice glide or summon roots to protect her.

Her second choice is the ingenious Clockwork Hammer, which transforms into a vicious mower. The ultimate weapon, though, is the Quantum Tuning Fork, but Malice can only use this when her magic abilities are maxed out later in the game.

A BIT OF DOUBT

We're always kind of twitchy when it comes to rock star involvement with games: David Bowie and Nomad Soul – we're still recovering. Somehow MTV's favourite Ska-rockers No Doubt have got involved with the voice acting on Malice. Vocalist Gwen Stafani has recorded quips for Malice herself, while band members Adrian Young and Tom Dumont have laid down some quotes for accomplices. In addition to the voice talents, the Malice soundtrack will include tracks from the current album, Rock Steady. There are even some remixes to be unlocked if you know where to look in the game.

Whether this will turn out to be 'Hella Good' or have us all 'Running' for the hills, remains to be seen.

The Quantum Tuning Fork is the ultimate weapon in the game – and looks it

CVG RECKONS

There's strong competition out there, especially on PS2, but Malice has enough clever features to put up a fight. **Paul**

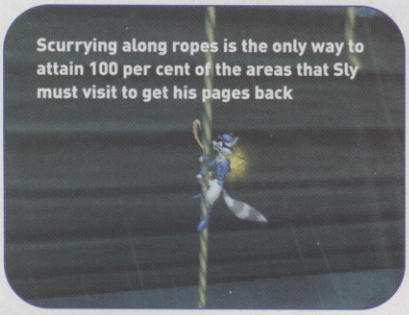
SLY RACCOON

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **EARLY 2003** DEVELOPER: **SUCKER PUNCH** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

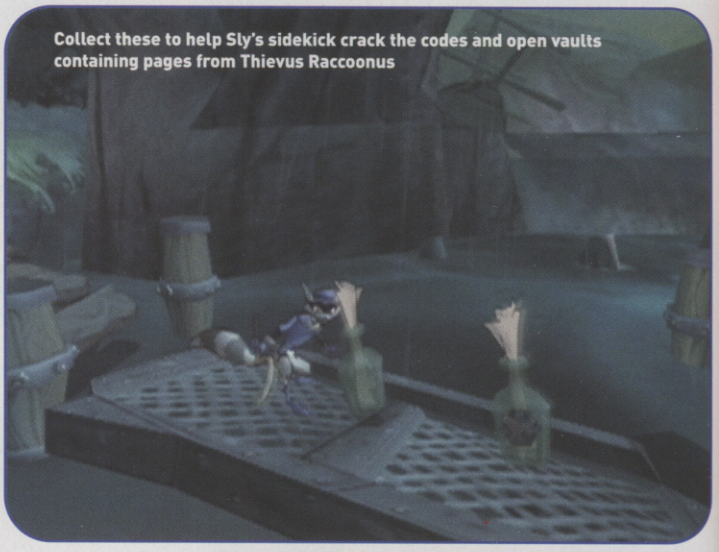
That's Solid Snake as in a nickname, he's not a real snake, you idiot! And that's Sly Raccoon as in a... Oh, so he's an actual *raccoon*?

We doubt Sly Badger would have sounded as cool. But it is with effortless (accidental?) grace that Sly Raccoon succeeds in this creature-feature take on Metal Gear Solid. Mammal Gear, perhaps. Oh, stop right there, CVG. Ol' Sly has the moves and grooves to have you gripping your controller tightly as he tackles this espionage adventure, tail-a-twitching. This varmint isn't half as lousy as you might expect.

Like Snake in MGS, Sly has a sidekick who helps solve puzzles from afar



Scurrying along ropes is the only way to attain 100 per cent of the areas that Sly must visit to get his pages back



Collect these to help Sly's sidekick crack the codes and open vaults containing pages from Thievus Raccoonus

You'll be glad to meet this character, who pops up to snap a photo of Sly. Saves your position in the game, see

THE SNEAK POINT

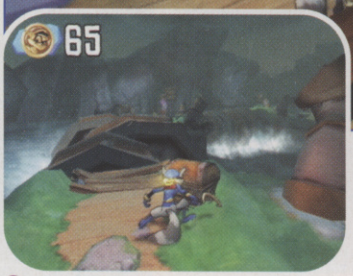
Our hero Sly Raccoon hails from a family of the world's greatest jewel thieves. A book containing secrets to the art of pilfering was stolen from Sly's family home. This tome, Thievus Raccoonus, was torn apart, its pieces divided among the thieves. It's your role to help Sly get these pages back, to learn increasingly more spectacular robbing skills, and ultimately nail the culprits.

You're reminded of Metal Gear Solid from the off, as our raccoon hero infiltrates enemy strongholds by dodging searchlights or shimmying along ledges. Taking the place of Solid Snake's sidekick Otocon is a turtle called Bently, and any advice that helps Sly sneak through an area undetected and unharmed comes from the turtle guy.

Guards are much more forgiving (stupid) in this game. Look at them, allowing such a flimsy disguise to work!

Trainee master thieves get dancing security lasers

Lock and key puzzles are tough to crack, as in this case



A lucky horseshoe lets Sly off the hook – but for one time only

ENTER THE RACCOON

Sly's basic abilities allow him to clamber, sneak and scurry in many ways, but special techniques are taught by the Thievus Raccoonus after Bently has cracked codes to vaults. He can only do this if Sly retrieves messages left in bottles, but these are hard to locate. With a few special moves under Sly's belt the game is more satisfying: slow-motion dives, spinning lunges to surprise the enemy, or even rolling into a ball to bowl over foes while he scurries through.

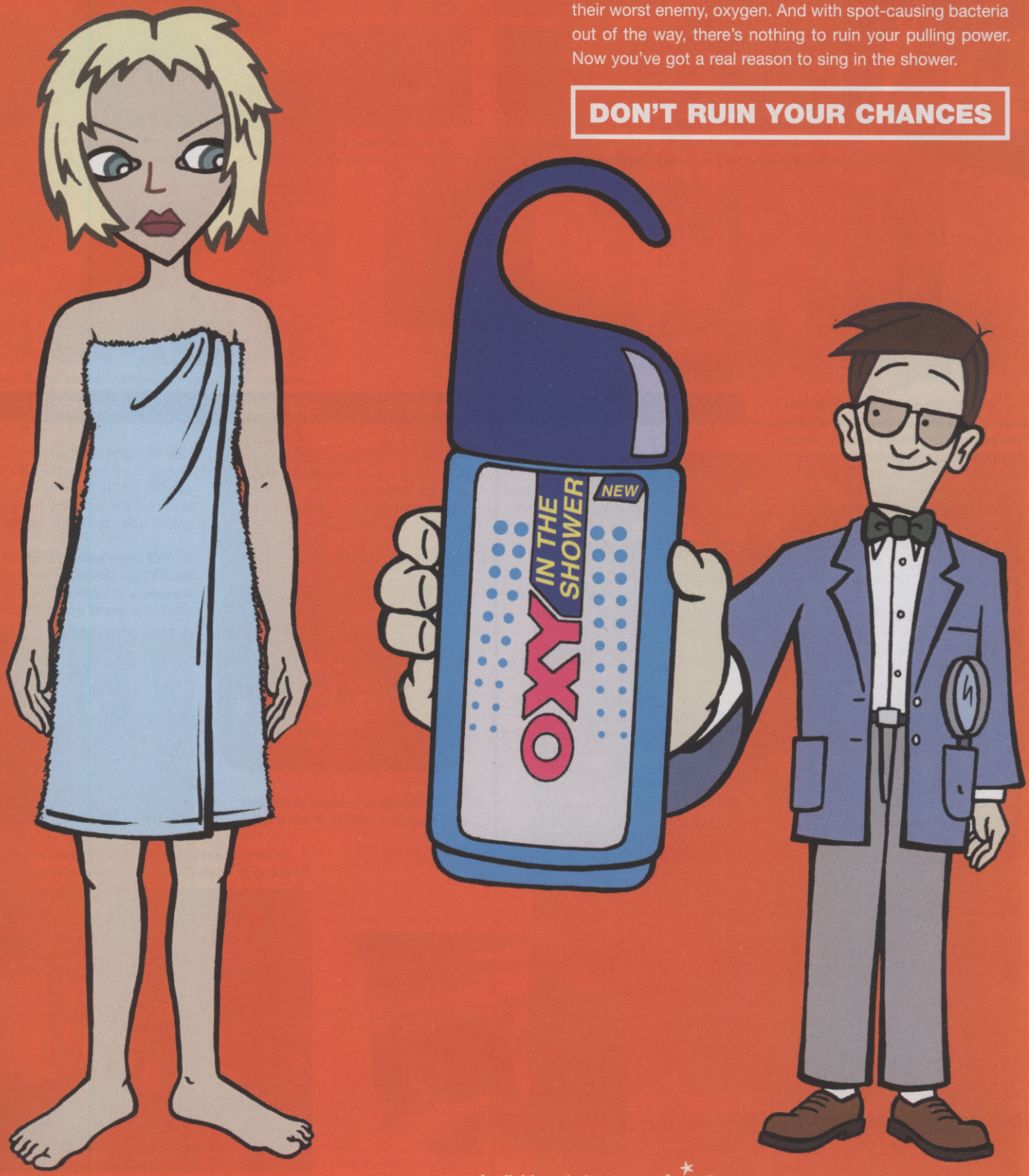
CVG RECKONS

Sly's certainly the coolest raccoon we know – he looks wicked slinking around. The game's a constant brainteaser too, with some excellent set pieces. Paul

HELPS SORT OUT SLEEPY HEADS AND BLACK HEADS

Now you can wake yourself up with a morning wash that helps prevent spots like the rest of the OXY range. New OXY in the Shower has the same OXY cleansing action that opens up pores to the air and exposes spot-causing bacteria to their worst enemy, oxygen. And with spot-causing bacteria out of the way, there's nothing to ruin your pulling power. Now you've got a real reason to sing in the shower.

DON'T RUIN YOUR CHANCES



Available only from superdrug. For more information visit www.oxy.co.uk

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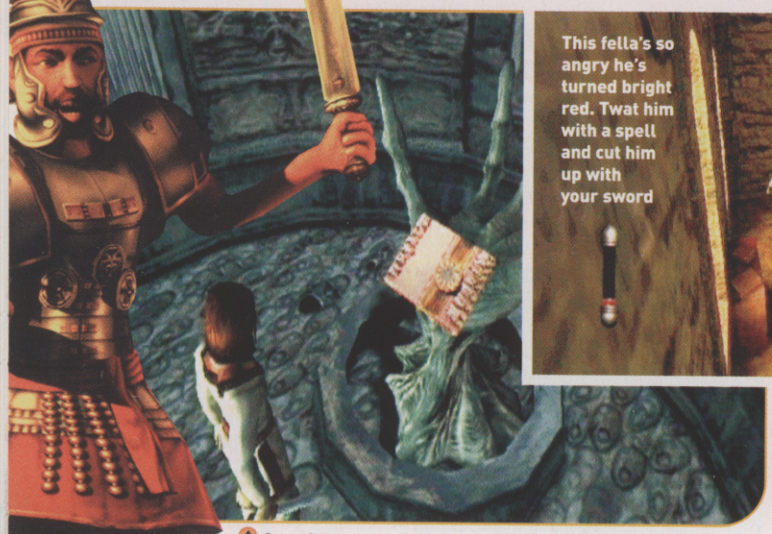


In order to get started in casting spells, you first have to seek out the precious Tome of Eternal Darkness

This fella's so angry he's turned bright red. Twat him with a spell and cut him up with your sword

By performing a finishing move, a bit of sanity energy will be restored. Maybe you'll be able to put off that holiday in the loony bin for a while, then

ETERNAL DARKNESS: SANITY'S REQUIEM

FORMAT: **GAMECUBE** OUT: **OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **SILICON KNIGHTS** PUBLISHER: **NINTENDO**

Things are about to go from bad to horrifically insane. First off, you're stuck in a freaky ancient booby-trapped temple. Armed only with a blowgun, you're forced to fight off hoards of gross zombies with serious anger management issues. But when the walls suddenly start bleeding and all sorts of crazy uncontrollable stuff begins to kick off, it's really time to panic. Yes, you're losing your mind.

GET THEE TO AN INSTITUTION

Not only is your body put to the test in Eternal Darkness, but your sanity receives a brutal battering too. When a creature locates you, a sinister light shoots out of its evil eyes, consuming your entire body and sapping energy from your Sanity Meter.

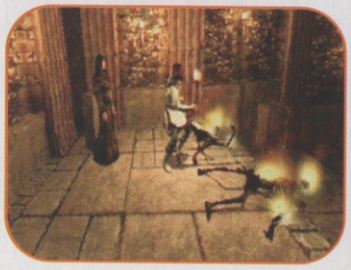
When this bar drops to critical levels, you can be guaranteed that some truly mental and unpredictable events are about to occur. Camera angles go berserk and become disorientating, rooms change shape, more monsters emerge, strange messages appear on screen and loads of other weird unexpected activities erupt to confuse and kill you. Here come the men in white coats!

CREEPILY CRAFTED

Eternal Darkness has been brilliantly put together, no doubt about it. Gorgeous environments and characters form the backbone, but the structure of the adventure and its exciting gameplay features are the real reasons why you should be sat on the edge of your seat.

Throughout the game you slip into the shoes of 12 main characters from different eras, stretching from 29BC to the AD2000. You must steer each character through his own episodic journey. But although each of the adventures is unique, the heroes and heroines you control are all linked through the intricate and eerily engaging web of the story that lies at the heart of the game.

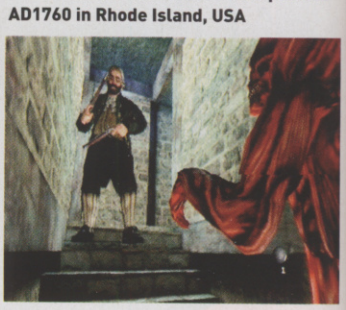
SEDUCTIVE FOREPLAY



You dispose of a couple of zombies, then head off in search of more action

One of the most exciting aspects of Eternal Darkness is the fact that it doesn't totally blow its wad at the start. On the contrary, the game lures you in and constantly teases you

This wiggy oddball is one Dr Maximillian Roivas, an ancestor of Alexandia. His adventures take place in AD1760 in Rhode Island, USA

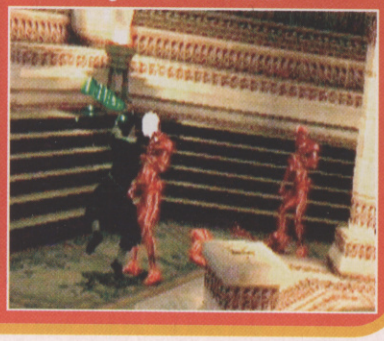


OFF WITH HIS HEAD

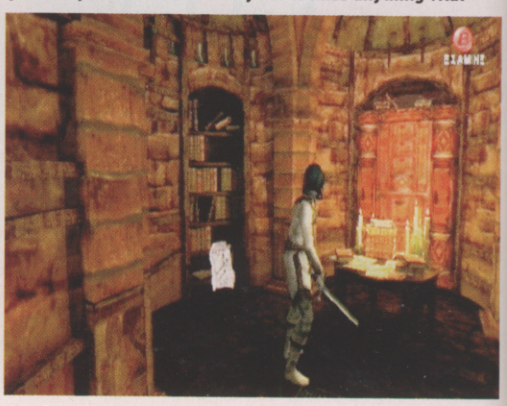
You wander into a room crawling with creatures and when one locates you, it saps your Sanity Meter just by staring at you. But by locking onto an attacker with the right trigger held down, you can aim at either of the beast's arms, its torso or head by moving the analog stick. So if you can hack off an enemy's head quickly, you will avoid having serious amounts of sanity power sapped, as the enemy can't see you. Duh! This in turn prevents a mental meltdown.

Choose to fight tactically like this, or just go berserk and charge in. Either way, the combat in Eternal Darkness feels very satisfying.

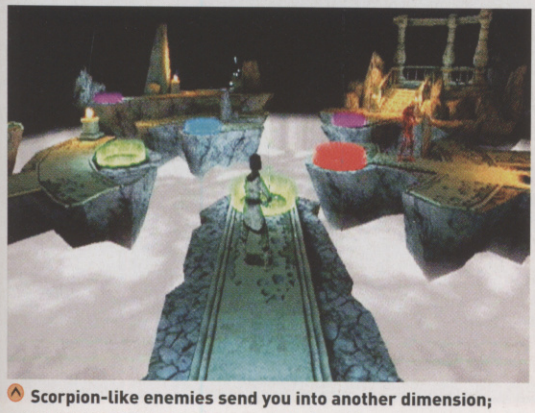
Hold down the right trigger to lock onto an enemy, and then push up on the analog stick to highlight his evil head. Don't hold back – now go for all-out attack!



An icon appears next to any object that can be examined, picked up or fiddled with – try not to miss anything vital



Don a magical necklace to regain health – you need to stand still though, so make sure the room isn't full of enemies first



Scorpion-like enemies send you into another dimension; escape by running onto warp pads before they change colour

with the promise of enticing new experiences. You only start to realise this a couple of hours into the adventure, once the awesome Sanity Meter feature comes into play and when you're introduced to conjuring your own custom-made spells.

Eternal Darkness may be a bit of a slow burner, but during the few hours when it's building up momentum, you're never left hanging in search of action. Throughout every stage there are loads of monsters to annihilate. The combat system is quite innovative, reasonably tactical and dead easy to pick up. Lock onto an enemy and select which body part to attack by moving the analog stick.

The first character you control is Alexandia Roivas, a pretty young woman. Her grandfather has just been killed so understandably she's fairly miffed

The temple is full of nasty surprises that pop out from nowhere, like crushing walls, giant swinging blades and arrows

Additionally, some of the early levels, like the temple stage, are riddled with deadly booby traps to avoid. So all in all there's plenty to keep you on your toes and fully entertained from the very beginning.

Resident Evil will no doubt rule the roost in the survival horror stakes, but in terms of a killer psychological action thriller, GameCube is lacking in talent. Enter stage left, Eternal Darkness. Artoon's adventure looks like it may carve its very own niche top slot on Nintendo's beautiful box.

TONGUE OF NEWT, WING OF BAT

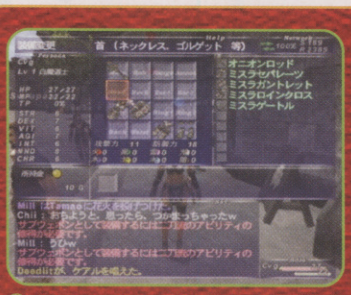
Conjuring Magick, complete with special 'k', is quite a sophisticated task in Eternal Darkness – it'll take a bit more effort than a simple "abrakadabra", as you'd expect. Some of the spells will automatically be created when you gather and collate specific elements – easy enough. However, there's also the facility to customise and create your own unique spells by experimenting with different combos.

One of your first magical abilities enables you to enchant any of the weapons you're carrying

Once you've successfully created the spell you want, you can configure it to the Dpad for easy use

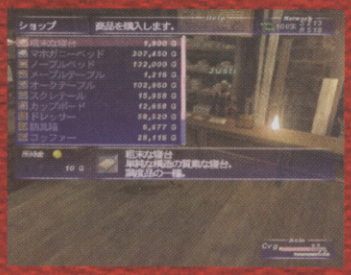
CVG RECKONS

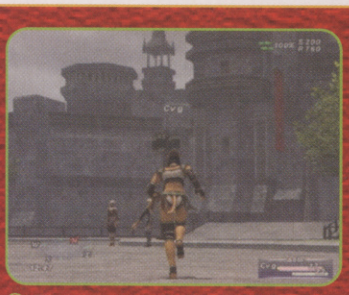
Eternal Darkness has been a bit of a dark horse (sorry!) up until now, but after several hours playing it we feel it could well become an essential Derby-winning thoroughbred for all Cube owners. **Mike**



You have the facility to equip various areas of your body individually

Purchase items at the shops in town





The main town in one kingdom can occupy you for hours of exploration

Pray for a quick release in Europe

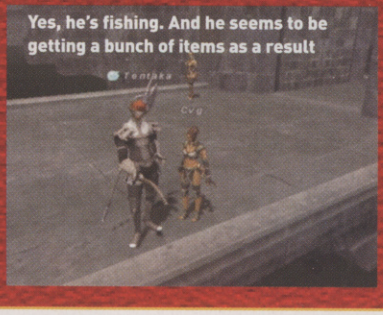
FINAL FANTASY XI

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **NOW** (JAPAN) **TBC** (UK) DEVELOPER: **SQUARESOFT** PUBLISHER: **SONY**

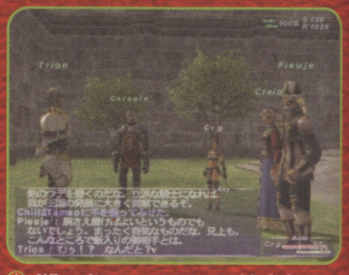
All hail the power of technology! The epic Final Fantasy is going online for the first time through PS2. In Japan, FFXI is already spinning around in some 100,000 PS2 systems. It's had more hype surrounding it than the boring Golden Jubilee, but maybe Square's massively multiplayer online role-player experiment will live up to its promises.

The goal in FFXI is to build a character – but one who exists in the largest virtual world we've ever seen. It's rich in detail too, with changing weather and a day/night cycle, both of which affect your ability in battle.

You'll fight alongside up to 18 others in an alliance, and in the distance you may see parties just as big going about their own way. You can build your character to stand out though, with eight classes at your disposal, each with visual modifications and the choice of six professions (sorcerer, knight, etc.).



Yes, he's fishing. And he seems to be getting a bunch of items as a result



When it comes to story, this is it

Both FFXI and PSO can be played through broadband or narrowband, although Sony seems to be more in favour of the former, pushing service and the FFXI game through its array of broadband partners. Nintendo, on the other hand, will release its

PHANTASY STAR ONLINE I & II

FORMAT: **GAMECUBE** OUT: **NOW** (JAPAN) **TBC** (UK) DEVELOPER: **SONIC TEAM (SEGA)** PUBLISHER: **SEGA**

Own a GameCube and fancy a bit of PSO action? Well, you won't have to wait long as console gaming's most recognised online role-player is getting an update to become the first online game for Nintendo's console, and there's a new offline mode of play too.

The offline mode allows four players to battle together or against one another via a split screen. Four small renditions of a PSO screen are handled simultaneously with no trouble on Cube, and this mode provides just as much fun as your typical deathmatch game.

But will this mode alone tempt Cube owners, or will they head online? If you're willing to spend your hard-earned paper-round cash on phone

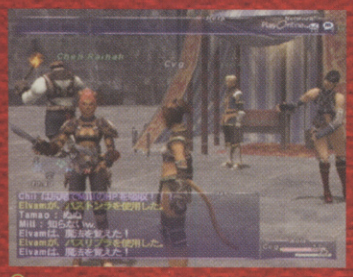
The split-screen mode is one of this version's biggest selling points

Boss encounters are just as exciting this time as they were before

You can play by yourself, but who will help out in situations like this?

It's pretty easy to find yourself lost in the big crowd of online players

You'll eventually have to ride Chocobos to far-off destinations



Strange computer-controlled characters populate the town

The FF series' knack for beautiful spells returns in FFXI – hoorah!

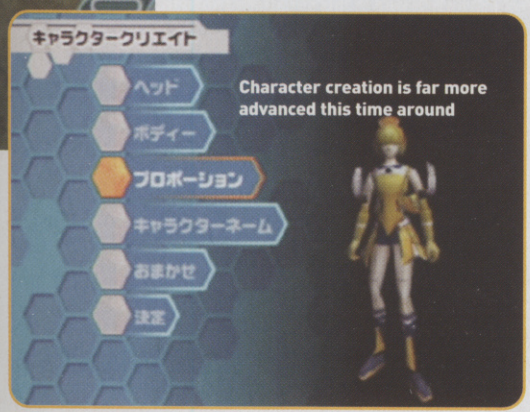
There is no offline mode, nor is there much in the way of a story; however, you shouldn't expect to lose interest quickly. What's more, the future could see new quests, character classes and perhaps kingdoms, thanks to the storage capabilities of Sony's hard disk.

CVG RECKONS

FFXI pushes much further than previous online console games, helping to make PS2 *the* place for online gaming. Anoop

GameCube dial-up modem before its broadband adaptor, meaning early PSO players will have to play (and pay) through normal phone lines. Hey, it worked for Sega with the strictly dial-up original PSO for Dreamcast, so maybe the trend will continue on the GameCube.

A mini web browser is included, which takes you to the PSO webpage



Character creation is far more advanced this time around

Greeting a crowd of gamers on the Mercury ship. We're all chums here

Four players take on the tough enemy

The futuristic city interface looks similar to before

The new set of stages look better than those of the original

and service charges, you can expect a game that builds on the the DC versions, but which basically gives much the same experience.

Your goal is to build up the characters you create to extreme levels, purchasing weapons and armour and finding secret items along the way. Episode I includes the original PSO and PSO ver 2, while Episode II brings a new full-length adventure.

CVG RECKONS

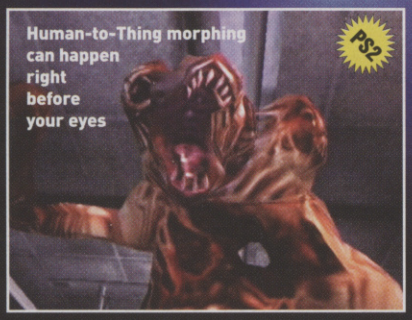
Online gaming through the GameCube works smoothly and the split-screen feature is a bonus, but it doesn't look much different than before. Anoop

THE THING

FORMAT: **PS2/XBOX/PC** OUT: **SEPTEMBER 20** DEVELOPER: **COMPUTER ARTWORKS** PUBLISHER: **VIVENDI**

"How will we make it?" asks Childs. "Maybe we shouldn't," replies MacReady, knowing if either of them is infected by the monstrous alien infestation that is The Thing then their survival would doom Earth. Cue music, roll credits.

One of the finest sci-fi horror movie endings ever, and in the 20 years since Carpenter's cult classic was released, millions have wondered what happens next. Is Childs The Thing, or Kurt Russell's chopper pilot, MacReady? Now the wait is over, and, in the words of publisher Vivendi: where the movie ended, the true terror begins.



Human-to-Thing morphing can happen right before your eyes

We swear we've seen Childs' body sitting frozen in the snow, but where the hell's MacReady...?

"I dunno what the hell's in there, but it's weird and pissed off, whatever it is"

Things come in all shapes and sizes, from ankle-snappers to this...

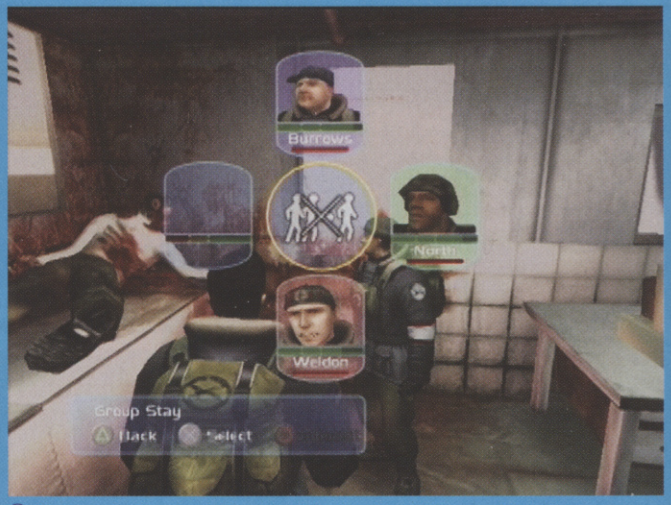
TRUST NO ONE

The Thing is survival horror with a twist. Incorporating the usual puzzle-solving, action and exploration, it also looks and handles in a Syphon Filter-y way, from creeping around 3D environments to being unable to move when you choose to shoot in first-person. And yes, it lends itself particularly well to console gaming.

That mess could be all that's needed to tip this soldier over the edge

MR WIBBLY

Unless you fancy having your still-beating heart ripped out and your eyes mushed like tinned peas, you'd best keep watch for the Sim-style symbols that appear over other characters' heads. It's pretty obvious what spanners and first aid symbols stand for, but you'll need to take a little time to memorise the icons relating to their state of Trust and Fear, or it'll be too late and your back-up will turn into your executioner. So here are a few to start you off.

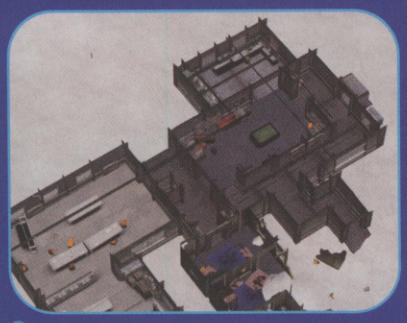


You can double-check Fear levels in this simplistic squad interface

TRUST ICONS	TECHNICAL TRANSLATION	REAL MEANING
	"My trust has gone from high to low"	"You ijit, you screwed something up"
	"My trust has gone from low to zero"	"I wouldn't slash on you if you were on fire"
	"My trust has gone from low to enemy"	"You gave me your gun, let me return it... bullet-first"

NORWEGIAN JOKES

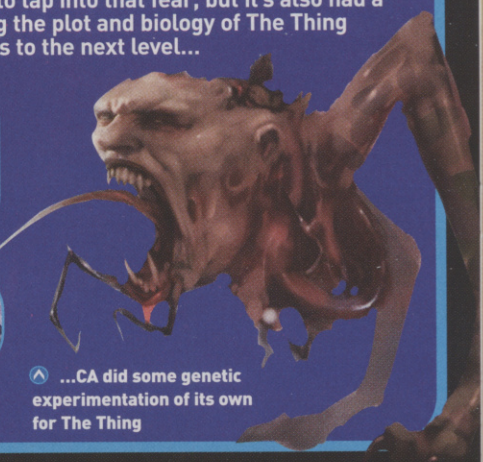
You don't have to watch the 1982 movie to get into The Thing or appreciate the running gags about Norwegians – but it helps. Everything from blood-test objectives to exploring the busted-up Antarctic scientific bases is doubly creepy when you know how the imitative monstrosity got to the icy continent in the first place, and what it's capable of. Not only has Computer Artworks gone to great lengths to recreate recognisable environments and elements from the movie to tap into that fear, but it's also had a fairly free hand developing the plot and biology of The Thing universe to take the scares to the next level...



The movie's US and Norwegian bases are painstakingly reconstructed by level designers...

...right down to this frozen Scandinavian suicide case. Nice, isn't it?

Remember this ground-breaking movie moment...



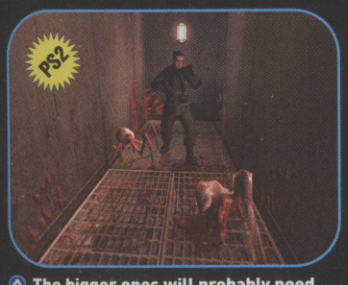
...CA did some genetic experimentation of its own for The Thing

It's also kind of squad-based, but, while other characters will take orders and follow you around, direct control is restricted to the central character, Blake. To progress you'll sometimes need the specific skills of other members of the military rescue teams, sent in by Uncle Sam to investigate why US Antarctic outpost 31 has been out of contact for three months.

Broken CCTV system or door access panel? Call the engineer. Need back-up in a firefight? A soldier or medic could be useful. Issuing instructions to whoever is in your squad at that time takes just a couple of button or key presses, and to make life even easier, symbols (see box-out) sometimes appear over their heads telling you what they're doing and need, and, most importantly, how they're feeling.

This is all part of The Thing's most innovative feature, its Trust/Fear system. Since The Thing can imitate any living creature, you're rarely certain whom you can trust, and even if they were human earlier, that doesn't mean they haven't been infected since.

You'll have to earn this guy's trust



The bigger ones will probably need finishing off with a flame-thrower

Nightmare: two Things, a machine gun and lots of exploding barrels

For instance, your squad can be legging it through a ferocious Antarctic blizzard when you notice someone is missing. Backtracking, you stumble across him – to discover he's turned into a blood-dripping fiend. And you gave him your flame-thrower... Oops.

HEY, CHILL OUT!

Now here's the clever bit: you're not the only one to be suspicious. Depending on your actions, as the plot unfolds, other squad members' emotions can swing wildly too, from trusting you so implicitly they'll blindly attack whoever you do, to totally freaking out with fear. When you call up the squad interface, even their portraits are literally gibbering and jerking madly.

These human wrecks will then refuse to cooperate with you. Try calming them down or making them trust you by giving them a gun, health or moving them to another room where they're not tripping over human giblets. If they go too far over the edge, though, they'll attack you or even top themselves. The really tricky bit is figuring out which of these characters are mission-critical and you go all-out to protect, and which you can have fun messing up their heads.

The Thing has one of the first movie examples of game rage, when, frustrated by a 'cheating' computer chess game, Russell fries it with whisky

Ah, the obligatory sniper rifle

CA brought us the organic visuals of Evolva, so expect some quality morphing

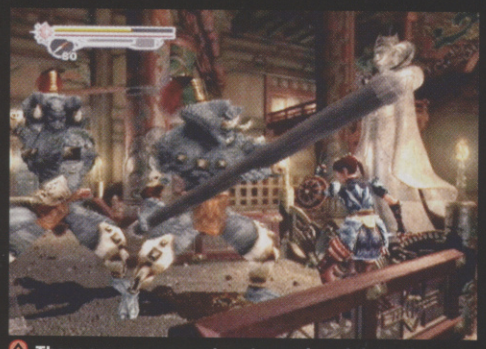
To avoid the risk of freezing to death, the blue meter tells you when to find cover

The whole Trust/Fear system is an interesting idea for sure, but we've yet to play The Thing enough to work out just *how* clever and complex it is – and how much replay value it adds.

If, after reading all of the above, you're sitting there still wondering why the hell you should give a damn, you obviously haven't seen the movie. So go rent it now – it's still superior to 99 per cent of the latest sci-fi horrors, and even the ancient special effects hold their own. Then tell us you don't want to play what happened next.

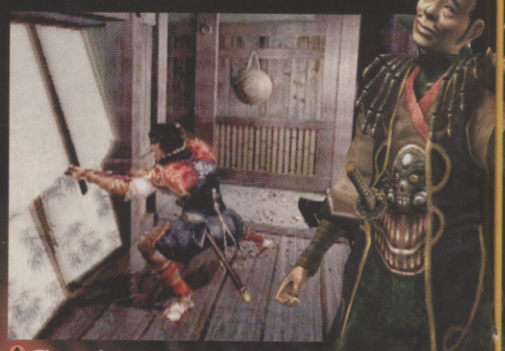
CVG RECKONS

"Trust is a tough thing to come by these days," says MacReady in the movie. Applies to big licence games too, and if The Thing is half as good to play as it is to watch, we'll all trust movie tie-ins a whole lot more in future. Pete



There are more monsters to mash and they all require different tactics if they're to be defeated

Jubei Yagyu was modelled on the famous Japanese actor, Masadu Matsura, who died in 1989



The environments are a lot more interactive than before

ONIMUSHA 2: SAMURAI'S DESTINY

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **OCTOBER 4** DEVELOPER: **CAPCOM** PUBLISHER: **CAPCOM**

Who'd want to be Onimusha 2...? As a sequel to the PS2's first million-seller and one of the console's most accomplished games, this sword-slashing, monster-mashing, magic-casting quest has a lot to live up to.

But with enhancements in every aspect of the gameplay, new role-player elements and cinematic production values which make the package feel like a Hollywood blockbuster, Onimusha **2** already makes the first instalment look limited, outdated and clumsy.

A NEW HERO

Onimusha **2** kicks-off in 1573, 13 years after the hero of the first adventure, Samanosuke, defeated the King of Demons and the undead warlord, Nobunaga Oda. However, despite Samanosuke's valiant attempts, Nobunaga managed to cheat death and become the new demon king. Now his minions are swarming across Japan, destroying peaceful villages as they attempt to enslave the island.

This time, Samanosuke isn't the central figure and players instead take control of a master swordsman called Jubei Yagyu. After finding his village ransacked, Jubei swears revenge against Nobunaga and embarks on an adventure which takes him from gloomy underground mines to beautiful sun-kissed beaches.

Onimusha **2** features the sort of pre-rendered backgrounds glimpsed in the first game, a fact that will have many fans howling with frustration if they'd hoped for 3D worlds which could be explored from any angle.

But even though the locations are similar to the original, the world they create is more interactive, organic and alive than that of any other survival horror game to date.

IF LOOKS COULD KILL

The opening scene sees Jubei exploring his village during a storm. Water trickles across brick surfaces, channels cut through the muddy ground, a fine mist of spray envelopes Jubei's head and shoulders – the effects are stunning.

The worlds are also made more organic by a variety of plants and trees which rustle and sway as Jubei sprints past, and frogs and rats inhabit the undergrowth which makes the static locations feel vibrant.

The living worlds are best illustrated by the mining town of Imasho. In contrast to the deserted locations seen in the first game, this village is teeming with life, with tradesmen, drunks and

UNLEASH THE DEMON

When struck, many demons release purple souls which Jubei can absorb. After collecting five purple souls, Jubei transforms into Onimusha, an invincible warrior who can kill enemies with a single blow. The Onimusha state only lasts for a short amount of time, and players must use strategy to unleash this demonic warrior when he's needed most.

Collect five purple souls and your character will transform into the fearsome Onimusha himself

Onimusha power lasts as long as the purple energy bar, which replaces your normal health meter

HEROES FOR HIRE

During the course of his epic travels, master swordsman Jubei meets four adventurers who join him on his quest.

By trading a variety of items with these characters, Jubei can persuade them to watch his back in perilous situations. These feisty heroes and heroines, each of them with his or her own story, can also be controlled in certain sections of the adventure.

This sexy female knight is the last ally to join Jubei but she's the first alternative character you get to control. She fights with a western-style sword but her past is shrouded in mystery

Kotaro is a mischievous Fuma Ninja who loves to play tricks on the residents of Imasho. He doesn't trust the female knight, Oyu

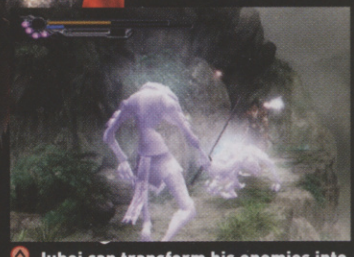
Master spear fighter Ekei is tortured by the death of his daughter and wants to avenge her memory

Magoichi is the leader of the famous Saiga Shu gun troop and he uses an ancient rifle to dispatch Nobunaga's demonic troops. Trading history books with Magoichi is sure to win his respect

Defeating the bosses is a tough task but your allies will often appear and lend you a hand along the way

The enemies are incredibly detailed and more imaginative than before

Oyu is the first alternative character you take control of in the adventure



Jubei can transform his enemies into blocks of ice – now smash them!

prostitutes wandering the streets and interacting with each other and anyone else who stops for a chat.

ROLE WITH IT

Imasho's citizens aren't just for decoration. Instead, speaking to the villagers brings a role-playing dimension to Onimusha **2** which adds depth to the bloodthirsty experience.

While nattering to villagers normally results in some useless observation on life, strangers will occasionally offer clues which set you on the road to solving a series of puzzles. Imasho also features a shop where players can buy items that can be traded with your allies in exchange for elusive goodies and to encourage them to back you up in battle.

Players who choose to ignore these role-player elements may find themselves in trouble as they face bosses single-handedly, but using items to win the respect of your peers pays dividends when your energy bar is almost exhausted.

The water effects are exquisite and the most convincing ever in a console game

ENHANCED COMBAT

Although Onimusha **2** is a deeper experience, combat is still central to the gameplay. As before, hammering the attack button unleashes an impressive range of slashes which can cut your enemies into ribbons, but rapidly tapping the magic button also performs some dazzling assaults.

Attacking multiple enemies is easier this time, and quick presses of the Dpad with the attack button allow you to spin around and lock on different enemies or kick monsters who are sneaking up from behind as you keep your sword focused on the cluster of enemies ahead.

New counter attacks are also included, which add an extra element of strategy, but as smart enemies can parry your counters and return blows, these moves must be executed with caution.

A wider variety of weapons – both long- and short-range – also adds more variety to the aggressive encounters, and offers players alternative ways of attacking troublesome demons.

Essentially, the game improves on the original in every way. It has already been a massive hit in Japan so when it finally arrives on British shores, Onimusha **2** is sure to be a storming success.

CVG RECKONS

Onimusha 2 is shaping up to be something of a PS2 classic. With more compelling characters, improved combat and gaming worlds which blur the boundary between fantasy and reality, this adventure is sure to be one of 2002's most memorable experiences. Dave

WELCOME TO THE WORLD

The Xbox version has all the exciting content of the PC version, but with an easier-to-use interface and none of the PC's long loading time problems. So the big black box finally has a big game to go with it. As Morrowind is forging the way for role-players on the Xbox, we take a nosey into the gameplay world to see if it's really up to the task.

The sun is setting so find somewhere to kip

Are you actually doing any damage? Who knows?

Even aside from the main quest there's plenty to do

THE ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND

FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **AUGUST** DEVELOPER: **BETHESDA** PUBLISHER: **UBI SOFT**

It's been a big hit on the PC but will The Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind make it on the Xbox?

Firstly, forget Final Fantasy and Zelda; Morrowind will be unlike any console role-player you've seen before. For a start, the gaming world is big – no, it's massive. In fact, if you held down the run button, the game pad would have to be surgically removed before you were even halfway across.

FREE AS A BIRD

You'll be completely free to explore the world of Morrowind exactly as you want to. If you choose to wander aimlessly finding your own little quests, you can. Alternatively, you can follow the plotline closely.

Now *this*, my friends, is an axe. Argue with me at your peril

I *really* hate seafood

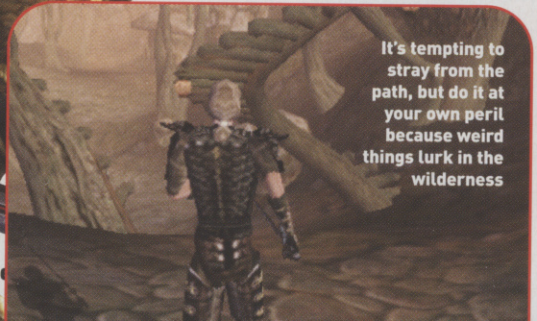
One goblin kebab coming right up

You'd run that quickly too if you had a haircut of these dodgy proportions

But the temptation to stray will be great, as the gaming world is extremely gorgeous with a full day and night cycle. Plus, there are so many weird and wonderful things to see, you'll definitely get lost in the wilderness a few hundred times.

There'll also be a host of characters for you to try out, from spooky, red-eyed dark elves to giant cat-like creatures. You'll be able to customise their skills and turn the meek and mild into kick-ass warriors.

Morrowind won't be for everyone, especially if you've got a short attention span, as it will require a lot of time and patience. But it's about time that consoles got a bit of the in-depth role-player action that PC-ers have enjoyed for so long.



It's tempting to stray from the path, but do it at your own peril because weird things lurk in the wilderness

CVG RECKONS

Revolution in console role-players or boredom in a box? We reckon you should get yourself a false beard and prepare to take a big bite of hardcore pie. Rhianna

GEKIDO

FORMAT: **GBA** OUT: **SEPTEMBER 6** DEVELOPER: **N.A.P.S** PUBLISHER: **ZOO**

Side-scrolling beat 'em ups are quickly becoming extinct, but Gekido on GBA is set on keeping the old-skool fighting fires burning.

Classic Final Fight-like action is what the core gameplay is all about, but unlike other straightforward scrolling punch fests, Gekido throws a pinch of adventuring and platform elements into the mix. And with Manga-styled visuals, flashy character animations and slick cutscenes, this handheld hard-hitter is not to be ignored.

Kick the stuffing out of enemies: it's lots of fun!

Ass-kicking manoeuvres: go wild

"I'm an official member of the Bruce Lee fanclub. Yeah!"

FORMAT: **GBA** OUT: **OCTOBER**
DEVELOPER: **REBELLION/DESTINATION** PUBLISHER: **ZOO**

MEDAL OF HONOR: UNDERGROUND

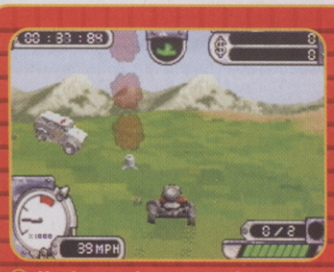
Blat! Unload your precious pistol on these nasty Nazi characters

Enemies are well disguised, so keep your peepers peeled

The likes of Doom and Ecks Vs Sever have already proved that first-person blasters can work perfectly well on Game Boy Advance. Medal Of Honor has been a massive hit on PS2 and PC, and now its crosshairs are firmly fixed on Nintendo's palm pleaser.

The game contains a full 17 levels to blitz through, and loads of classic weapons to go bananas with. As with the other titles in the MOH series, every stage is objective-based, requiring you to complete all the challenges in order to finish a mission. One of your first tasks is to scour an area crawling with enemies in search of your brother. Follow him to a secret area without getting gunned down.

So far, so good. Catch the full review next issue.



You have to hurry to each checkpoint within a tight time limit

Look out! Police vehicles will try to ram the crap out of you

SMUGGLER'S RUN

You wouldn't catch Postman Pat delivering suspect packages across deserts and fields with the cops on his ass, but then again, Postman Pat is a boring old git in a stupid van.

However, the main game mode of Smuggler's Run, Smuggler's Mission, sees you doing exactly this in 29 separate mini-missions. The thrill of blazing around cross-country, hitting checkpoints and avoiding the cops is highlighted by the fact that Smuggler's Run on Game Boy Advance has fully 3D expansive environments. Whether it can cut the pace with any of the top handheld racers will be revealed in next month's CVG.

FORMAT: **GBA** OUT: **SEPTEMBER 13**
DEVELOPER: **ROCKSTAR**
PUBLISHER: **ZOO**

The Turf War mode see your team battling to deliver smuggled goods

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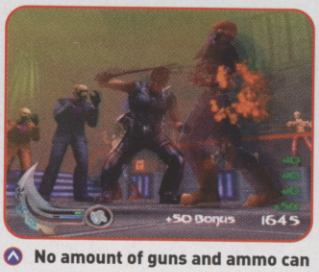
BLADE II

FORMAT: **XBOX/PS2** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **MUCKY FOOT** PUBLISHER: **ACTIVISION**



No amount of guns and ammo can compare to the cool of B's blade!

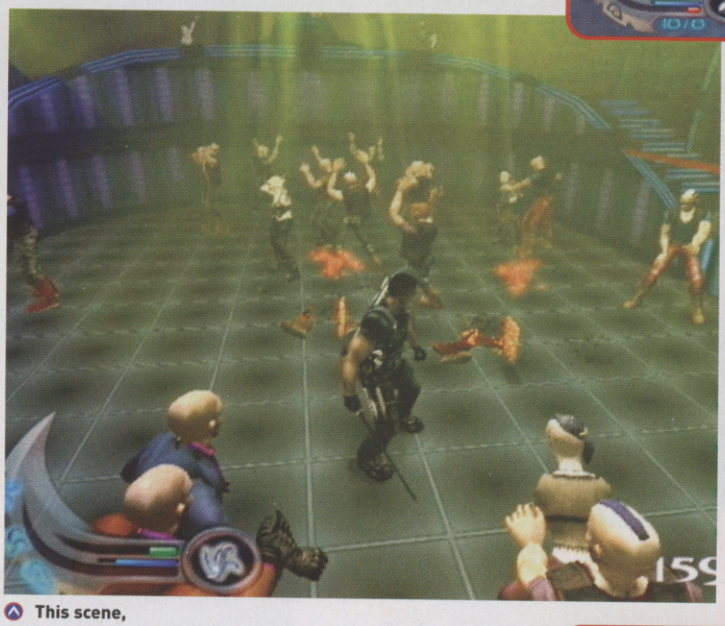
The movie Blade II kicked ass like we couldn't believe – we had to see it again to accept the incredible truth! As for the game, well, it could have been a dozy cash-in but it looks like it will hit as hard as its big screen brother.

A brilliantly realised 'B' (as in Blade) is the centrepiece, at his disposal a smart new combat system allowing him to strike out from all sides. What's more, the game doesn't lazily follow the exact plot of the movie. Instead it is a Marvel Comics-approved adventure *inspired* by the recent box office smash hit. Woo, check you out – you truly are Blade!

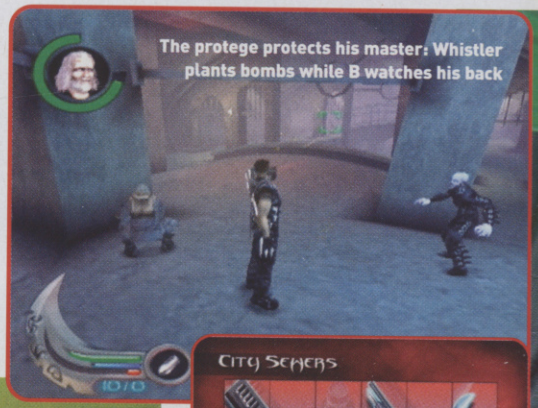
FIGHT LIKE THE DAYWALKER

It would have been acceptable if a standard control set-up had been used, but developer Mucky Foot has risked something new – and a good thing too. Like us, you're probably expecting a couple of buttons to take care of punches and kicks. Instead, the right analog stick takes care of it all, Blade dishing out combos in any direction by nudging the stick towards the enemy. Get the timing sorted and as many as eight hits can be linked into a combo.

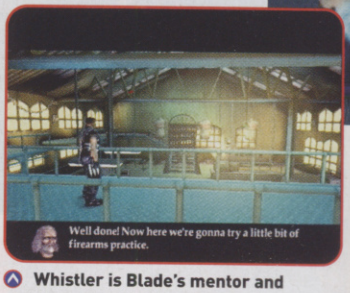
Blade's coolest moves involve dealing vampire death with his sword. To ensure that you experience B's phenomenal blade action in the game, you need to engage in mucho unarmed combat. This serves to increase Blade's



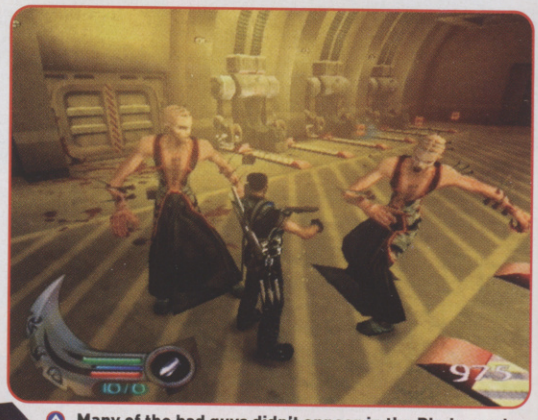
This scene, packed to the brim with characters, ought to have you drooling – take out every last one of them, all in one go!



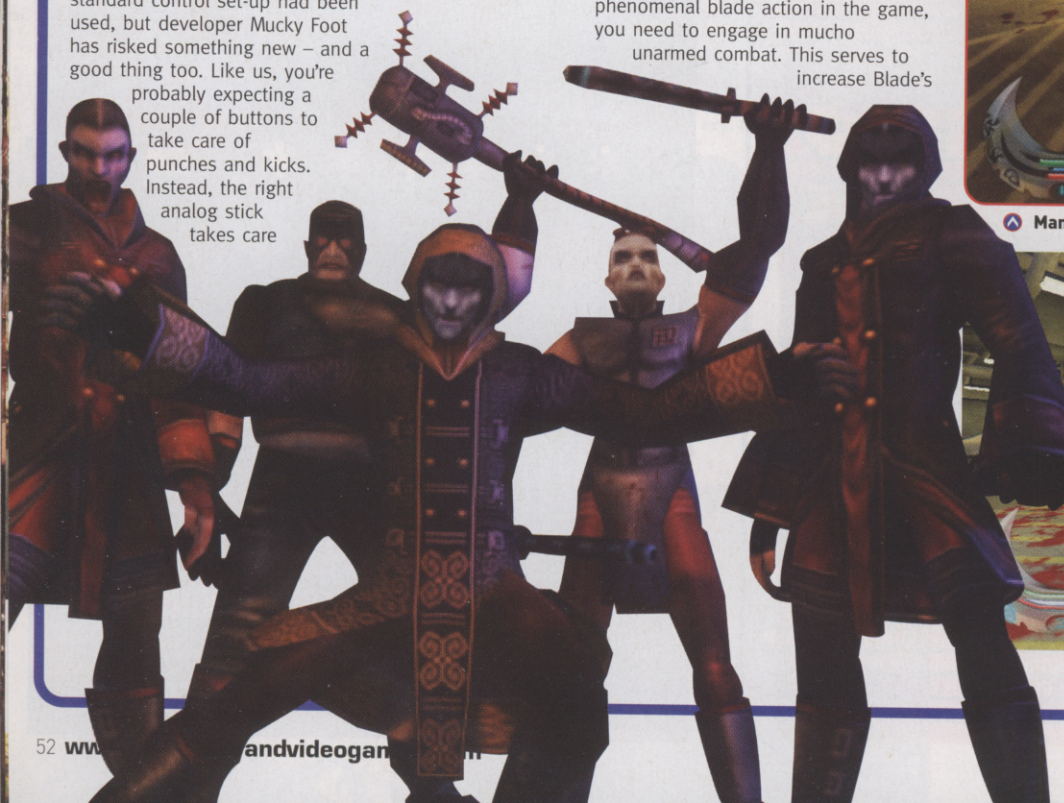
Some weapons need a certain amount of points first

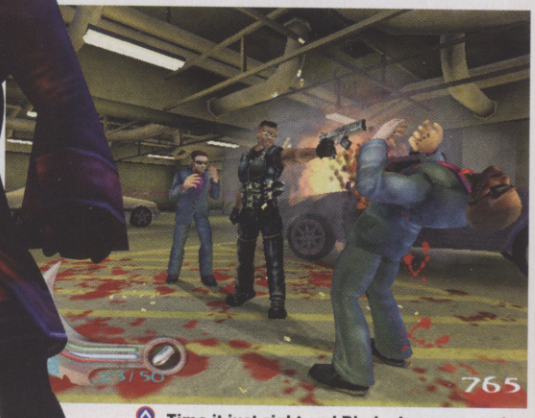


Whistler is Blade's mentor and watches over him in this training mission

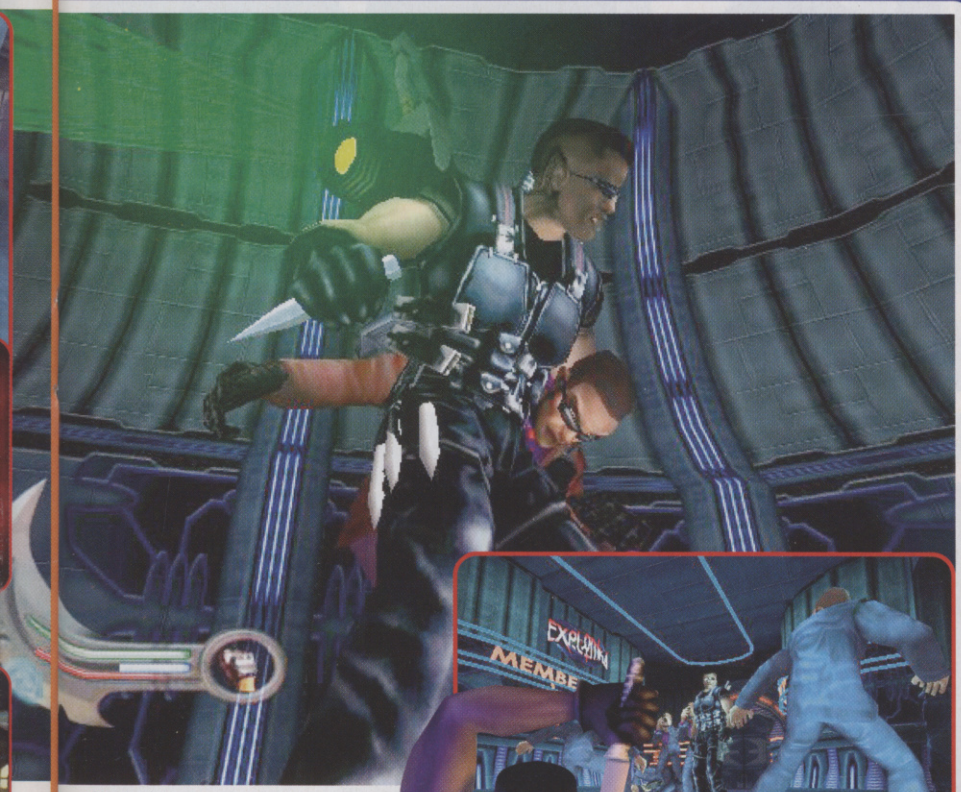


Many of the bad guys didn't appear in the Blade movies

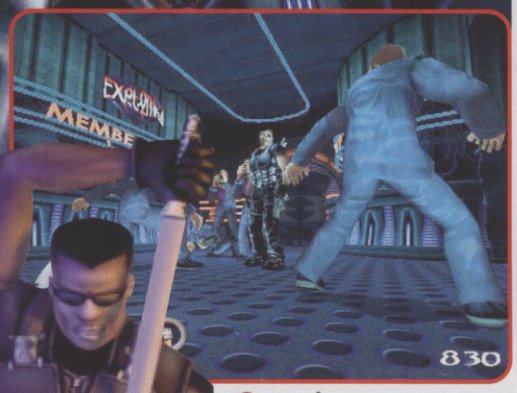




Time it just right and Blade drops vamps in one go with an accurate shot to the head



Finishing moves like this one happens automatically at close range



A 360° combat system makes it a little easier to survive

B's sword cuts a swathe through ghouls like a hot knife through butter

Bloodlust, granting him up to three Rage modes. At its most basic, Rage mode enables B to give his enemy a taste of cold steel, tearing him apart in spectacular ways with his sword. If you allow the Rage to build, B eventually becomes invulnerable to attack. In the third and ultimate Rage mode, B becomes twice as strong to deliver justice to the un-dead.

THIS IS WHAT WE CAME TO SEE!

Each time B takes out a bad guy, you pity other action heroes for their dull routines. Because whether it's a shotgun, pistol or his trademark glaive (boomerang blade), Blade takes it to 'em in style, in the movies and now – incredibly – in the game. Just in like the movie, vamps disintegrate into molten ash, freezing momentarily before their paper-thin skin peels, revealing the skeleton beneath. Blade's greatest party tricks are executed at point blank range, staking freaks in the head or doubling them over to place a shotgun in their gut. It's gruesome, but g-r-e-a-t.

GOT A FEELING ABOUT THIS

There are a few things that aren't so clever, but which could be ironed out for the review version. First and foremost, Blade can't clamber onto ledges as you'd expect him to; in fact he doesn't seem to climb anything. Also, we would have liked to see Blade do moves combining jumps and attacks – spinning back-kicks, elbow drops, stuff like that. Hopefully the game will still hang together – we'll let you know in next issue's review.

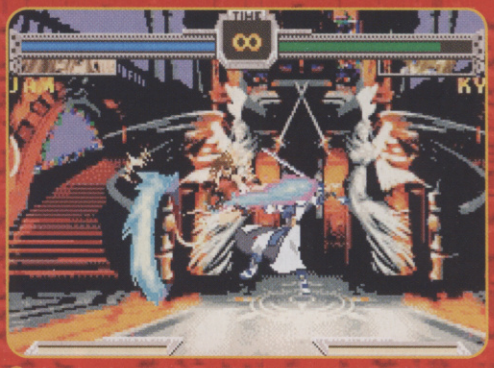
It's a blast to fight unarmed, seeing how long you can keep the combo going

CVG RECKONS

This delivers much more than we expected from a Blade II game in terms of character realisation and visual effects. Control will be the key. Paul

GUILTY GEAR X

FORMAT: **GBA** OUT: **SEPTEMBER**
DEVELOPER: **ARC SYSTEM WORKS**
PUBLISHER: **SAMMY EUROPE**



Jam lands a lightning kick on Ky's chiselled chin

Watching Guilty Gear X in full flow on PS2 is almost as visually stimulating as witnessing a buxom Brazilian stripper spread Nutella all over her bronzed baps. So recreating such a sensation on a 32-bit handheld with a three-inch screen was never going to happen.

However, GGX still manages to look good on GBA. And gameplay-wise, its snappy 2D brawling action easily makes it a contender for the heavyweight handheld fighter crown.

Ky fires off a mad spike attack, aimed right for Johnny's happy sac

Each of the 14 nutty characters in the starting line-up has a blinding array of bizarre moves and special attacks. Plus, with extra characters to unlock, and a solid number of staple brawling play modes – including Arcade, 3 on 3, and Tag Match – there should be plenty to keep you coming back again and again.

The special moves in Guilty Gear X are insanely flamboyant

These factors, plus the fact that it boasts some of the fastest and most frantic action we've seen so far in a beat 'em up on GBA, mean that GGX will definitely deserve some serious attention come September.

LOONS: THE FIGHT FOR FAME

Earn enough Star Quality to open arcade mini-games

Open the door to let the spooky chairs come flying in

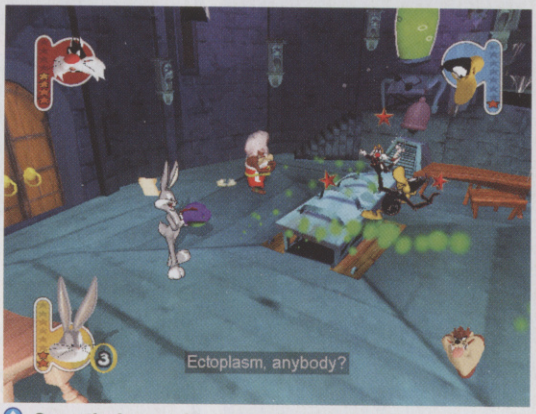
FORMAT: **XBOX** OUT: **SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER** DEVELOPER: **WARTHOG** PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**

Some stars will do anything for fame. To decide who gets to appear in the next Warner Bros cartoon movie, Bugs, Daffy, Sylvester and Taz kick off in a series of slapstick auditions. Their common aim? To be the last 'toon standing.

Loons is a multiplayer fighting game with an emphasis on fun and simplicity. There's just one attack button, but to spice up the action you get cool props, power-ups and sneaky tricks.

HOLLYWOOD HURT

The game does away with the traditional energy bar, instead using a Star Quality meter. Take damage and this meter dips, but fight well and activate the many props around the level and your Star Quality rises. A cool touch, it can help you back into the game, even if you've been taking a severe pummelling.



Spray the Loons with ectoplasm in the name of Hollywood

Yosemite Sam swoops in to tell you which props are ready

Drop enough depth charges on the others to send them for an early bath

Each level is a small arena based on a movie set and the props differ accordingly. Try drinking moonshine in the Old West to inflate like a balloon and drop gassy bombs, or activate a laser defence system in the Mission Impossible level to zap your foes. You can pick up weapon items like bubble-gum guns and bombs, plus wild-card 'contracts' that often hinder you as much as help.

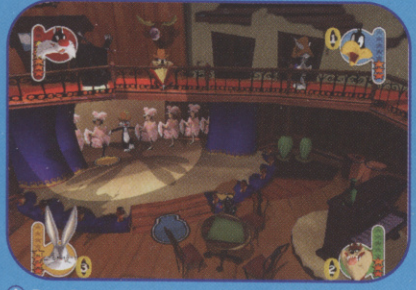
It's simplistic but brilliant fun – at least in the short term. There should be lots of gameplay for your money, as well as genuinely funny animations and attacks to use in your quest.

PROPPING UP THE BAR

You'd expect a load of crazy props on a movie set, but the ones in Loons take the insanity-iced biscuit. They're essential for raising your Star Quality bar. Yosemite Sam will tell you which prop is ready to be activated, so watch out for him.

Activate the Acme multiple life jacket machine to pummel your foes

Use the Hades Engine to strike a few lightning bolts and inhale the delicate aroma of frying fur...



Dancing girls: a chance to steal the limelight

Tinkle the ivories to win the audition

CVG RECKONS

Fun, frantic and has some cool original touches. We just hope it's got enough staying power to keep you playing and giggling over the long term. Lee

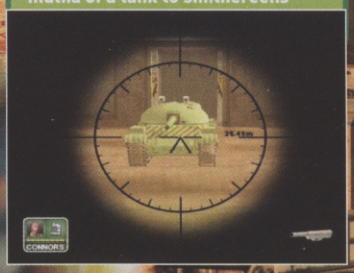
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM

FORMAT: **PS2** OUT: **SEPTEMBER** DEVELOPER: **PIVOTAL GAMES** PUBLISHER: **SCI**

Aha, the machine gun nest. This, friends, is the infantryman's greatest enemy, as you will discover

You'll definitely need your buddies around you at a time like this

Zoom in, turn on – and blow this mutha of a tank to smithereens



When you think of entertainment, you don't often think of the Gulf War. But SCi must do, because it's set its new squad-based shooter smack bang in the middle of it.

You control four members of your team; all have individual skills. You can take control of each separately, but you can also issue orders and send your team mates running off to distant locations, get them ready to fight, or have them hold their ground.

As each of them has different skills, you'll need to take care of them or you won't get through all of the missions. These range from straight-ahead shooting to deep-cover infiltration tasks, and about half of them are actually based on real-life Gulf War missions. Pretty cool, huh?

The game's graphics are altogether looking pretty sweet, we think

Not all missions in Conflict actually take place in the desert. This picturesque location is Kuwait City

MISSION IMPROBABLE

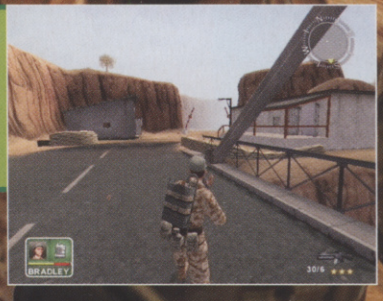
Unlike in a lot of first-person shooters, you won't have to shoot everything that moves. A good soldier carries out his objectives and gets out of there before everything goes pear-shaped. Here's how one of the early missions starts.

Who are these scurvy-looking characters? Don't shoot the poor beggars – they're just civilians!

The real enemies are further on. Crouch, shoot, reload. Auto-targeting helps here

Look, it's the Emir of Kuwait! Get him to safety and you're sorted for medals

A bridge! Storm it! But not on your own – probably best to call for reinforcements first...



LIKE REAL LIFE, ONLY VIOLENT

Just because it's set in a real-life conflict, it doesn't mean this is going to be the most realistic game ever made. You can still be shot several times before you're seriously injured, and there are a lot more soldiers blowing up tanks than we remember seeing on telly in the early Nineties. But when you're running around in first- or third-person perspective, targeting enemies and rescuing civilians, it does feel kind of real.

The preview version we've seen is a bit limited in terms of the distance it can draw, but we're assured that this will be improved for the final game. Which should mean that Conflict: Desert Storm is set to rock our military world.

CVG RECKONS

Squad-based games are going to be all over the PS2 soon. Desert Storm is an early contender, but one that looks and feels the part. Keep an eye on this one, troopers! Joff

Wicked value

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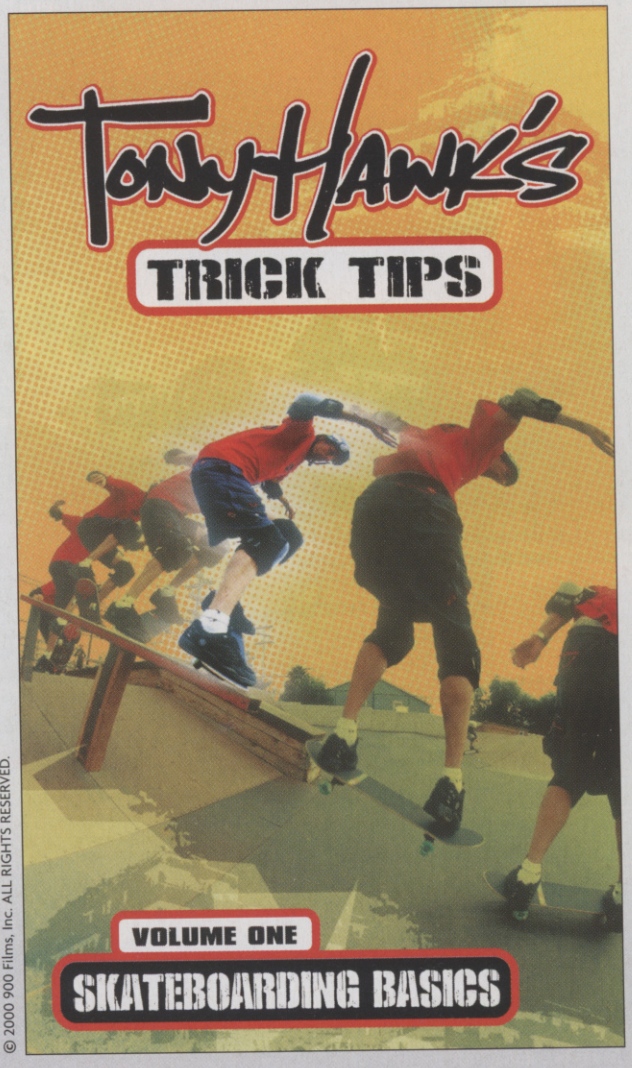

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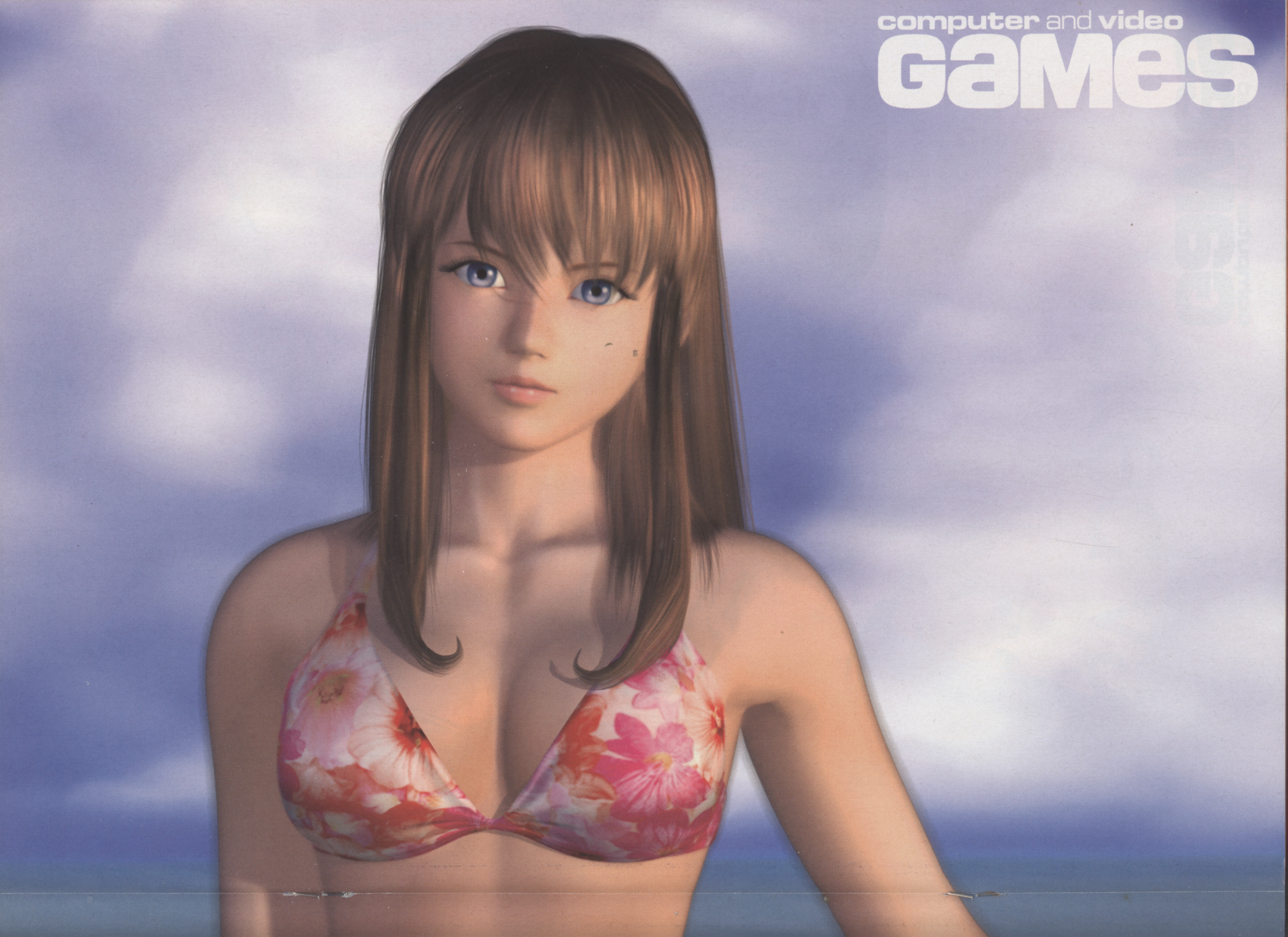
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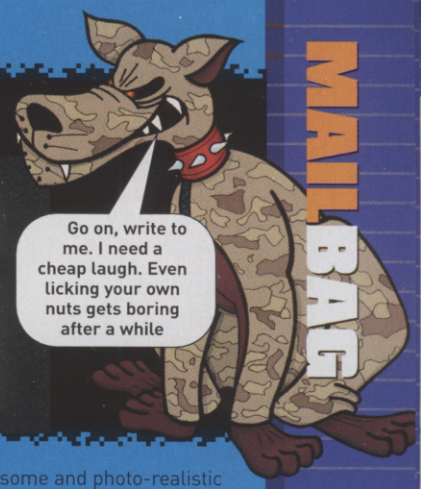


It's lucky that the mag got written this month, what with the arrival of Mario Sunshine in the office and the ensuing fights over who gets to take it home. Yesterday Alex knocked Paul out and nipped off with it for the night. But Lee accosted him in an alleyway and wrestled the game from his bloody hands. Enough about us though, we want to hear *your* ramblings.

FANS OF PANZER

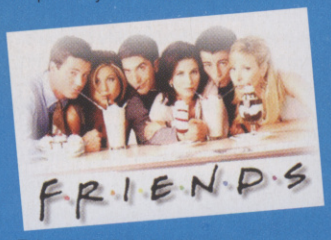
I am a great fan of RPGs. So when I read last month's edition of CVG, an article caught my eye on Panzer Dragoon Orta. I thought to myself: after all this time, is the second best RPG on Saturn (second only to Shining Force) finally going to get the sequel it deserves? But the sequel isn't gonna be an RPG! Panzer Dragoon Saga had one of the best and most original battle systems of any RPG. I really think Team Pandora (or whoever the new producers are)

have wasted the opportunity to create the world's best RPG and make millions. I just wondered whether or not you guys agree?
L-Dub, Bristol
P.S. Panzer Dragoon 1 and 2 were total crap!

Well, L, We've seen Panzer Dragoon Orta running and while it looks just as purty as a new-born goat in springtime, the gameplay appeared to be a bit limited. So, yeah, we agree...

TV PLEA

Considering games overtook films as the biggest grossing entertainment form years ago, I don't think it's asking a lot to have a decent show devoted to it at a decent time of the day, especially when C4 re-runs



Friends 345,442 billion times. Bring back GamesMaster, I won't tell you again, TV people!
MayjorDump

Our readers are an angry lot. Check out this geezer up next...

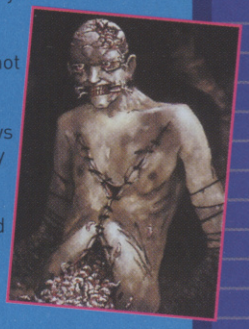
SANU THE TWO LETTER NINJA

If this is how you treat your loyal fans who stuck with you from the birth of the original Game Boy to the present day (12 bloody years at least), then I'm gonna stop buying your mag!
Sanu Miah

See, and all we did was edit his last letter a bit. You know, the same way we have with this one...

F1 DUNG?

EA's new F1 2002 on PS2 is just as crap and dull as the rest of their F1 games. After reading your review of it last issue I thought it seemed an improvement on all their other lazy versions. How can you have said all those things about it like "the smoothest, sexiest F1 experience to date", and say it has awesome and photo-realistic graphics? It's about as much fun to look at and play as watching a corpse rot. It deserved a five not an impressive eight. I used to trust your reviews and wouldn't buy a game I might have doubts about until I read your review of it. I can't believe you fooled me into buying this steaming pile of cow dung.
Max Cady



Okay, Max (and yeah, we get the Cape Fear reference), you've had your say. Now we want to know what other readers think. Right, we're off to watch corpses rot.

GOLDEN BONE

FOR REAL

When I look through your magazine I often see games boasting unparalleled realism. But I actually find realism defeats the purpose of computer games. Realism doesn't necessarily make a game much fun (does it?) but it is something a lot of people expect these days. For instance: Gran Turismo 3. I occasionally crash into the side barriers and then bounce off. Do you call that realism? I don't have a problem with selective realism – good looks and realistic car handling are fine. However, we should not be trying to replace real life as it's not always fun. Computer games are a form of escapism, a way to get away from it all. Whether it looks 'real' or not it is just not important to me.
Danny Mc, Bradford

You're right. Gaming will always be a virtual experience – that's its charm. You're only limited by your imagination.

JOYTECH®

On the telly, what do points mean? That's right, PRIZES! And now they do in CVG too. Your pearls of wisdom can blag you a load of free gear. We've teamed up with those purveyors of fine add-ons at JOYTECH to offer each month's Golden Bone letter writer a free bundle of quality peripherals. If the PS2 goodies below don't grab you, we've also got bundles for PSone and GBA. Just make sure you mark your name and address clearly, okay?

CVG STINKER

BUY THIS MAN A DICTIONARY

Sometimes CVG can be really weird. You agree with Phil Brooks' letter about what's the point of rhythm and dance games, yet you give Samba De Amigo 5/5 DS Euromix 4/5 and lots of above-average scores for others, e.g. Vib Ribbon, Bust-A-Groove, Beatmania, etc. Music games you can just jump in and out off and can actually be fun, unlike games such as MGS where you play to the end because you bought it. This isn't an attack on MGS because I feel there is a good game there. So does CVG appreciate music games or not? And in the same issue you give Frequency 8/10 and previously Gitaroo Man 8/10. Case of split personality?

"It's horses for courses..." What's that supposed to mean? It sounds like something a granny would say.

Anthiny Cheng

CVG: *'Horses for courses' just means whatever floats your boat, whatever you're into, whatever pulls your chain, you know? God, it's hardly brain surgery. And now you understand that, perhaps you'd care to revise your opinion that we 'agreed' with Phil Brooks. We didn't. We just said it was horses for... Oh, never mind.*

MARK HAS AN IDEA

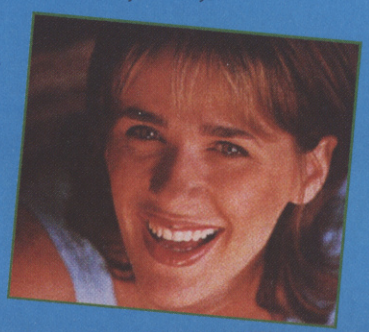
I long for the day when games consoles are more like DVD players and TVs: you pick a model you like, or a make you like, and they all have similar hardware specs, so they all play the same games (it would save the problems of multi-format releases).

Roll on the Omni format console, leaving all the hardware companies to make exceptional games and software, and leaving the consumer to pick out a console design that fits their home set-up.

Death to the multi-format system, I say.

Mark Davison

Nice idea, Mark. Give yourself a pat on the back, two lemon curd sandwiches and five minutes alone in a room with Smiley, Smiley, Carol Smillie.



THE CVG TRANSLATE-O-TRON REVISITED

Letter: After reading no end of articles about 'retro' games and consoles, I feel I must mention the much-forgotten Philips CDi.
Translation: *I used to own a console called The Philips CDi.*
Letter: The fact is that the CDi was put into an early grave due to poor software back-up and extortionate UK prices.
Translation: *The fact is that the CDi was discontinued thanks to truly abysmal sales.*
Letter: However, some CDi titles such as Mad Dog McRee, Burn Cycle and The 7th Guest were quite ground-breaking at the time for a home computer games console, not to mention its VCD capability.
Translation: *Come on, it had three good games, that's almost as many as the GameCube, and it could play VCDs, which were like huge DVDs that nobody bought either.*
Letter: I guess if there is a moral to my tale it must be that 'sometimes the good die young!'. But not in my house. My CDi is sitting comfortably under my telly and it's not going anywhere for a long time.
Translation: *Okay, I admit it, I can't afford a GameCube...*
Letter: It does have a PS2 resting on top...
Translation: *Yeah, right.*

Tim Hope

DAVE HAS A RANT

Having read the letter saying that the Xbox will fail because it doesn't have Squaresoft on board, I feel the need to reply. Although this may be true globally, I for one am thankful that I won't have to put up with the rubbish that is Final Fantasy. I hate RPGs. I've tried not to – I've played Phantasy Star, Skies Of Arcadia, Final Fantasy (including X), Breath Of Fire etc. – and found them dire. Gaming at the moment is the best it's been for years and that is thanks to there being three formats. In the next few years things are going to get better and Microsoft (love 'em or hate 'em) will have played its part in this.

Dave Ponsford, Doncaster

So you played AT LEAST four RPGs before you decided you didn't like 'em?

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED BY LIAM AND NOEL GALLAGHER OF OASIS*

I'm kind of in love with classic games, with my eye on the Sega Saturn. So, I was hoping that what with you being a heavyweight games mag and all, you could help by letting me know if I can access Saturn games on the Internet for download onto a CDR for free. Thanks!

Nigel Kaunda, Harare, Zimbabwe

Liam: *Try going to www.google.com, Nigel. Mad fer it.*
Noel: *Yeah? And then what, y'f**k?*
Liam: *Type 'Saturn emulators', y' stupid f**k. And if you think we're going to tell you how to pirate games, you got a f**kin' shock coming.*

We've got Broken Sword I on Game Boy Advance, and Broken Sword III will be on there as well, but I'd like to know if there is any sign of Broken Sword II coming to the handheld?

Victoria Poyner

Liam and Noel: *F**k knows.*

I bought a GameCube with Rogue Leader about two weeks ago. Although it is an excellent game, it has frozen completely two or three times. When this happens I cannot even use the reset button on my GameCube, I have to turn it off and on again to continue.

So I need to know whether this is a problem with my GameCube or with Rogue Leader as, if my 'Cube is faulty, I only have another two weeks to return it.

I would be grateful if you could let me know if you are aware of any problems with Rogue Leader. Many thanks,

Tony Osborne

Liam: *You didn't f**kin' say whether it's freezing with other games, cos after all, you're my wonderwall.*
*Noel: The 'Cube shouldn't freeze mate, no f**kin' way.*
Liam: *Try it with other games, and try the game on other 'Cubes. F**kin' sort it out.*

I have had my PlayStation 2 for a while now, and I have read a lot about when you play DVDs on it, they are shown with the screen green. But when I got mine I just used the leads that came with it, played a DVD and it was fine – the colours were perfect, in fact.

So if you could tell me what the hell these people are on about, I would be very interested to know.

Michael Hagan, London

Liam: *It only f**kin' goes green if you use a Scart cable. Don't worry, mate. Baybee, do you really want to know, how me garden grows.*

***Actually, one of our writers pretending to be the Gallagher brothers.**

MEET THE WIZARD

We get a lot of letters asking for our advice on which next-gen console to buy. Well, we've got a wizard in to help. All you need to do is send an email to the mailbag address, call it 'Help Me, O Wizard', and in the email provide the following information:

1) Your current console if you've got one, but don't worry if you haven't
2) Your three favourite games ever
3) Your three favourite films ever

From this information, and providing that you're polite of course, the Wizard will tell you which console you should buy. Cool, eh?*

*We're sorry, but the Wizard cannot enter into any private correspondence.

Do you fancy having 15 minutes of fame in CVG? Then wing your high scores, challenges and opinions to us right now! Write to us at: Freeplay, CVG, Dennis Publishing, 30 Cleveland Street, London W1T 4JD. Alternatively, email us at: mailbag.cvg@dennis.co.uk

EDIT MONSTER

The Evil Edit Monster Tears Into Your letters...

I'm sick of ignorant, dumb-ass PlayStation owners. I'm sick of being told Nintendo is for kids. I had it all the time with my dearest N64, and now I'm getting it over GameCube.
James
CVG: *Carnage. The monster mutilated the second half of James' letter. Oh, the horror...*

I'm lighting my own farts with Elvis!
Janice Shortend
CVG: All we could salvage from Janice's letter were these few words we stitched together to form this abomination of literature...

Jeez us Chrysler. I need a job so I can afford a PS2.
Billy Nolan, Abbeydorney, Ireland
CVG: The monster mangled the intestines of Billy's letter, leaving just these few tattered and bloody words...

SHORT STUFF

I've been reading since #184 and think the mag as it is is currently the best it's been in years! Thanks!
Dan Morris, Redditch

CVG: *No worries, mate*

I noticed that you have got rid of Dan. Bring back Dan, he was great!
Christopher Hyde

CVG: *WUR-RONG! Dan is where he always has been, behind his desk, occasionally grunting like an arthritic Rottweiler. Unless you mean Dan Morris, and he's just above this letter.*

How come nearly all the films that are based on games are really crap! Why can't film-makers take their time with the plot instead of releasing half-assed flicks!
Matt, Bristol

CVG: *Waddaya mean? You seen the Mario Bros and Street Fighter movies? They're genius. And Res Evil? It's classic Hollywood action intertwined with clever subplots. Hang on, wrong movie...*

ASK THE OFFICE

If you could have only one console, which one would it be?
Richard, Isle of Sheppey

PAUL: My heart belongs to GameCube, but realistically I'd have to say PS2 just for the range of games.
MIKE: PS2, but I think in a year or so I'd say GameCube for Mario and Zelda.
LEWIS: GC, because it looks beautiful and I've just been playing Pikmin all weekend.

THREAD HEAD

(IN)COHERENT MASS-DEBATING FROM THE FORUMS OF CVG.COM

super_sonic999 Sun Jun 23 07:50 PM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Who's the best company?! Giants Nintendo? Format masters Sony? Or the super Sega!? One message from my last post... (Sonic v Mario). Aren't you forgetting something? Sure Mario could call Luigi but Sonic could call Tails, Amy and Knuckles! Besides, Sonic could whip Mario in a fight!!!!!!!!
Evil_Ryu1 Mon Jun 24 01:22 PM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Sonic's just a little hedgehog. Mario would kick him around like a football.
samoza1 Mon Jun 24 01:57 PM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Sonic games are consistantly crap. see Sonic's adventures 1 and 2. Nintendo would never release such shoddy games. Keep Looking Lively There O'Wily One.
y2cplan Mon Jun 24 02:13 PM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Mario is in consistantly good games, Sonic has only appeared in one. Perhaps this is why Sega no longer have the market share for their own console. When your leading character is appearing in sub-standard computer games perhaps it's time to throw in the towel. Maybe it's a wise decision by Sony and Microsoft to not have one core character, this prevents one character bringing a company down. Just think, if Mario Sunshine turns out to be absolute poo, people would begin to think Nintendo were doomed as Mario symbolises Nintendo's health.
Noobsaibot Tue Jun 25 12:57 AM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Yes but Nintendo have Pokemon and Zelda to fall back on.
samoza1 Tue Jun 25 09:29 AM	Re: It's a classic! Nintendo v Sega v Sony! Reply Surely Pokemon must be on a downward curve. Mario and Zelda will survive because they are aimed somewhat towards a mature audience. Pokemon has its mature fans i.e. me!, but it's based on a youth market. And kids are fickle. How long did it take them to jump on the Digimon/Harry Potter/Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (Heros in a half shell) bandwagon. I am not saying Nintendo will collapse, I am just saying it is risky investing your company in a set number of characters because one really bad game with Mario in could undermine your entire company.
acidman666 Thu June 27 0:12 PM	Re: Top 10 Games ever! Reply Ok, let's hear it. Everybody's top 10 games ever, any console, any time. Sure CVG has done all this before but I'm sure there were people who didn't send in their favourites, so let's give it a go now.
HRGiger_ Thu Jun 27 04:21 PM	Re: Top 10 Games ever! Reply Monopoly Scrabble Trivial Pursuit Operation Buckeroo Ker-Plunk! Snap Hide The Sausage Ludo Tiddlywinks

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EXTENDEDPLAY

GET THE MOST OUT OF THE GAMES YOU'VE GOT

Keep getting gunned down in Soldier Of Fortune, or are the Nazis winning the war in Medal Of Honor: Frontline? You know what we're going to say: don't bother practising – just cheat, with the aid of CVG's killer tips!

THE ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND

PC

Press ~ during gameplay to display the console window, then type player–> followed by one of the cheats below.

FIGHT MODE
Setflying 1
SUPERJUMPS
setsuperjump 1
WALK ON WATER
setwaterwalking 1
BREATHE UNDERWATER
setwaterbreathing 1
SET PLAYER LEVEL
setlevel [number]
SET MAXIMUM FATIGUE VALUE
setfatigue [number]
SET MAXIMUM MAGIC VALUE
setmagicka [number]
SET PLAYER HEALTH
sethealth [number]
ADD INDICATED AMOUNT OF GOLD
additem gold_100 [number]
SHOW ALL THE TOWNS ON FULL MAP
fillmap
TOGGLE GOD MODE
togglegodmode

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

PS2

GOD MODE
During gameplay press Select, then hold down L1 + L2 + R1 + R2 + Square and press Left.
INVISIBLE
During gameplay press Select, then hold down L1 + L2 + Square and press Left.
FULL AMMO
During gameplay press Select, then hold down R1 + Square and press Left.
HEAVY WEAPONS WITH AMMO
During gameplay press Select, then

hold down L2 + R2 + Square and press Left.
LIGHT WEAPONS WITH AMMO
During gameplay press Select, then hold down L1 + R1 + Square and press Left.
NO CLIPPING
During gameplay press Select, then hold down L1 + L2 + R1 + Square and press Left.
NO GRAVITY
During gameplay press Select, then hold down L1 + L2 + R2 + Left + Square and press Start.

ISS 2

XBOX

Enter the following codes at the title screen. They are only usable in friendly matches and cannot be saved.

ALL STAR TEAM
A, A, Y, Y, B, X, B, X, L, R, L3 (click left stick), R3 (click right stick), Select+Start.
BIG HEAD
Down, Right, Up, Left, A, B, Y, X, White, Black, Start+Select
2-D PLAYER
L3, L3, R3, R3, L, R, Black, White, B, A, Select+Start

ROGUE LEADER ROGUE SQUADRON 2

GC

You need to enter the following codes in the passcode menu. Unlike all the other codes for the game though, the selection we have here only need to be entered once. R2-D2 will then warble a confirmation.

MONOCHROME GRAPHICS LIONHEAD
AUDIO COMMENTARY BLAHBLAH
SOUND TEST COMPOSER
ART GALLERY EXHIBIT!
DOCUMENTARY ?INSIDER
CREDITS THATSME!

REALLY STUCK ?

Absolutely stumped on a game? Ridiculed by your mates? There is hope: The Computer And Video Games Tips Helpline.

0906 466 4659

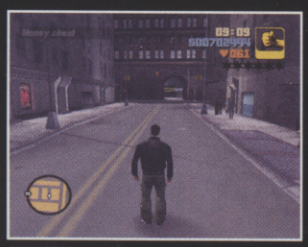
Open seven days a week, 8am-11pm. On the very rare occasion that they can't help, your query will be passed on to a support team, who guarantees to find you an answer within 24 hours.

Calls cost £1.50 per minute at all times. Charges will appear on your standard telephone bill. If you do not pay the bill yourself, seek permission from whoever does before calling. In case of problems, please call Customer Services on 0870 800 6155.

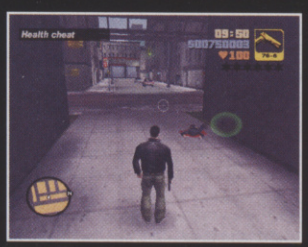
GRANDTHEFTAUTO3

Not to be outdone by GTA3 on the PS2, the PC version has enough cheats to make even the hardest criminal proud. Enter any of the following codes during gameplay by just typing them in. A message will flash at the top of the screen to confirm correct code entry.

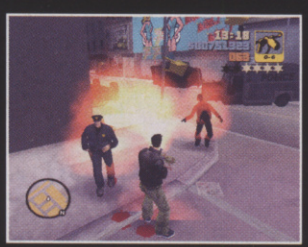
ALL WEAPONS: gunsgunsguns



MONEY: ifiwerearichman

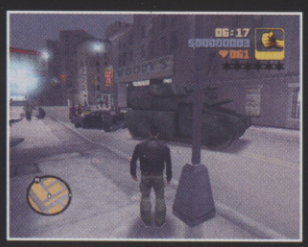


HEALTH: gesundheit



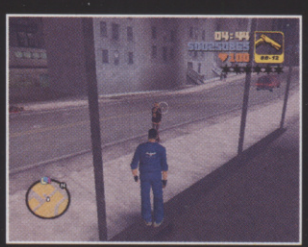
UP WANTED LEVEL: morepoliceplease

LOWER WANTED LEVEL: nopoliceplease



RHINO (TANK): giveusatank

DESTROY CARS: bangbangbang

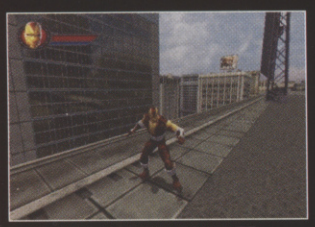


COSTUME CHANGE: ilikedressingup

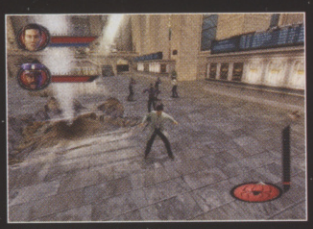
SPIDER-MAN

Enter one of the following codes in the codes part of the Special menu. To disable the code re-enter it. A laughing sound will confirm correct code entry.

MARY JANE: GIRLNEXTDOOR

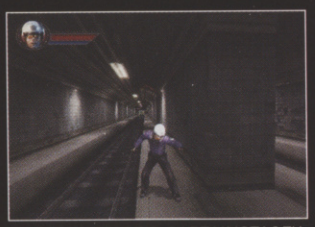


SHOCKER: HERMANSCHULTZ

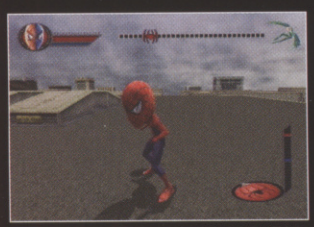


SCIENTIST: SERUM

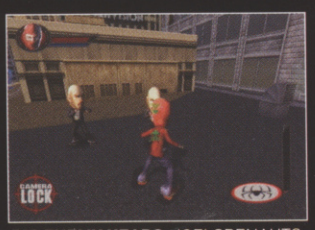
POLICE OFFICER: REALHERO



CAPTAIN STACEY: CAPTAINSTACEY



BIG HEAD & FEET: GOESTOYOURHEAD

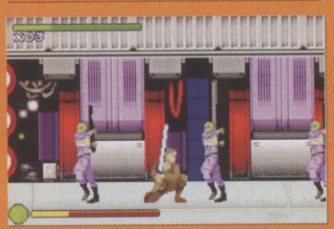


BIG ENEMY HEADS: JOELSPENAUTS

STAR WARS EPISODE 2 ATTACK OF THE CLONES

GBA A ton of passwords for this hard game, from James Rodan.

LEVEL	PADAWAN	KNIGHT
2	BHDBGJ	BJDGGM
3	BLFGHT	BJFGHM
4	BLGGDT	BJGGDM
5	BHHBFJ	BJHGFM
6	BGKBCK	BJKGCM
7	BGLBSK	BJLGSM
8	BGMBTK	BJMGTM
9	BGNBQK	BJNGQM
10	BMPGRS	BJPGRM
11	BBGQBNK	BGQGNP



GUN VALKYRIE

XBOX To make Kelly truly hard you need to find all of the hidden Halley Cores. Kelly will then automatically upgrade herself for the third time to become Kelly 3.

VALLEY 1-3
In Valley 1 the Core is on the highest of the second set of platforms. In Valley 2 it's on a high part near the exit to the area with the up drafts. In Valley 3 it's at the end of the level.

CIVILIAN BASE 1-3
In Civilian Base 1 it's in the third large room. In Civilian Base 2 when you boost up through a very small hole you should drop off the side then go down at any corner. In Civilian Base 3 go through a door near the bottom.

NAGLFAR'S PIT 1-2
In Naglfar's Pit 1 it is under the platform you start on. In Pit 2 the Core is at the very bottom in the centre.

YGGDRASILL 1-2
In Yggdrasill 1 it's about halfway down on the wall in plain sight. In Yggdrasill 2 it's about halfway up the wall in plain sight.

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

GC The following characters can be unlocked if you beat them after they challenge you. Getting them to challenge you is no simple task, so try using these tips – sent in by Dan Meyer. If all else fails, just keep playing Versus mode hundreds of times over, until you get challenged.

DR MARIO
Complete Classic mode with Mario on any difficulty without using any Continues at all.

FALCO
Clear the 100 Man Melee.

GANONDORF
Beat Event #29.

JIGGLYPUFF
Finish Adventure or Classic with any of the characters.

LUIGI
Play vs mode 800 times or when playing Adventure mode make sure the single second digit on the timer is a 2 when you cross the finish line.

MARTH
Use all 14 of the original characters when in vs. mode.

MEWTWO
Play 700 vs. mode matches or spend more than 20 hours playing vs. mode.

MR GAME AND WATCH
Unlock all the other characters first, then beat Classic mode.

PICHU
Beat event #37 or play 200 matches in vs. mode.

ROY
Beat Classic mode with Marth without using any continues.

YOUNG LINK
Finish Classic mode with Link, Zelda and eight other characters.

BRITNEY'S DANCE BEAT

GBA Enter HMNFK in the Password section of Mode Select to unlock Concert and Video modes. Cheat sent in by tips expert Vince Mainolfi.

AGGRESSIVE INLINE

PS2 Enter one of the following codes in the Cheat screen to make this game much, much easier.

LEVEL SELECT, PARK EDITOR OBJECTS, FULL STATS
Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, B, A.

ALL CHARACTERS
Down, Right, Right, Down, Left, Down, Left, Down, Right, Right, Right.

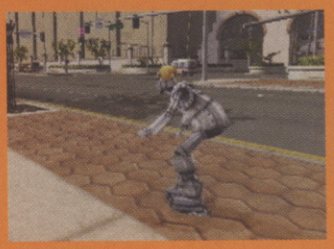
KEYS
Left, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Up.

SUPERSPIN
Left, Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right, Up.

JUICE REGENERATION
Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Right, Down, Up, Up, Down, A, I.

INVULNERABILITY
K, H, U, F, U.

LOW GRAVITY WALL RIDE
Up, Down, Up, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, A, B, A, B, S.



STATE OF EMERGENCY

PS2 Enter any of these cheats during gameplay to automatically equip your character with that weapon.

PEPPER SPRAY
Press Left, Right, Down, L1, Square.

PISTOL
Press Left, Right, Down, L1, Triangle.

SHOTGUN
Press Left, Right, Down, L2, Triangle Button.

AK47
Press Left, Right, Down, R2, Triangle Button.

GRENADE
Press Left, Right, Down, R2, Square Button.

GRENADE LAUNCHER
Press Left, Right, Down, R1, Square.

M16
Press Left, Right, Down, R2, Circle Button

MINIGUN
Press Left, Right, Down, R1, Triangle Button.

FLAMETHROWER
Press Left, Right, Down, R1, Circle Button.

MOLOTOV COCKTAIL
Press Left, Right, Down, R2, X Button.

ROCKET LAUNCHER
Press Left, Right, Down, R1, X Button.

TAZER
Press Left, Right, Down, L1, Circle Button.

TEAR GAS
Left, Right, Down, L1, X Button.

YOUR BEST TIPS

Every month the best reader tip will be printed and will score one of the latest games as a prize. Send your tips to: barny_zoeller@dennis.co.uk or

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MEDAL OF HONOR FRONTLINE

The three button codes must be entered during gameplay when in the pause menu. The rest of the cheats here can all be entered in the Password section found in Options.

The mission codes unlock the first level from each section of the game. To unlock levels after you've passed that stage, just play a level, fail, then enter the MONKEY cheat. This cheat also gets you a Gold Medal on that mission.

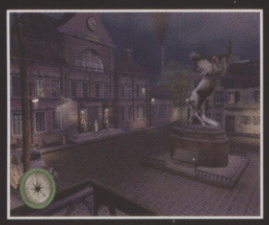
BULLET SHIELD:
Circle. Select, R2, R2, R1, R1, L1, R1

IMMORTALITY:
Square, L1, Circle, R1, Triangle, L2, Select, R2

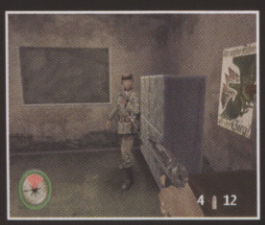
MISSION 2, LEVEL 1:
ORANGUTAN

MISSION 3, LEVEL 1:
BABOON

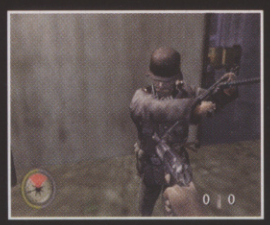
MISSION 4, LEVEL 1:
CHIMPANZEE



MISSION 5, LEVEL 1:
LEMUR



MISSION 6, LEVEL 1:
GORILLA



NEXT LEVEL:
MONKEY

UNLIMITED AMMO:
Circle, L2, Square, L1, Select, R2, Triangle, Select

The CHEATMISTRESS presents

CHEATS UNLIMITED

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A = 0 1
Ace Combat 4: S. Skies
Age of Empires 2
Agent Under Fire
Airblade
Alex F's Player Man.2001
Alex F's Player Manager
Alien Resurrection
Alone in the Dark 4
Alundra 2
Army Men RTS
Army Men: Land Sea Air
Army Men: Lock & Load
Atlantis 3: New World
B = 0 2
Baldur's Gate: Dark All.
Batman Vengeance
Blood Omen 2
Breath of Fire 4
Broken Sword 1 & 2
Burnout
C = 0 3
C&C: Red Alert
C-12 Final Resistance
Champ. Manager 2001
Chase the Express
Command & Conquer
Crash Bandicoot 1, 2, 3 & WoC
Crash Bash
Crazy Taxi
Cricket 2002
D = 0 4
D. Nukem: Time to Kill
Dark Cloud
Dave Mirra BMX 2
Deus-Ex
Devil May Cry
Die Hard Trilogy
Digimon World
Dino Crisis
Dracula Last Sanctuary
Dracula Resurrection
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Driver
Driver 2
Dropship
Duke Nukem: L.of Babes
Dynasty Warriors 2 & 3
E = 0 5
Escape Monkey Island
Evil Dead
Extermination
F = 0 6
Fear Effect
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
FIFA 2001 & 2002 7 World Cup
Final Fantasy 6
Final Fantasy 7
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy 9
Final Fantasy 10
Final Fantasy Anthology
Fur Fighters
G = 0 7
Genma Onimusha
Golden Sun
Goldeneye
Gran Turismo
Gran Turismo 2
Gran Turismo 3
Grand Theft Auto
Grand Theft Auto 2
Grand Theft Auto 3
H = 0 8
Half Life
Halo
Harry Potter
Headhunter
Hidden & Dangerous
Hogs of War
I = 0 9
In Cold Blood
J = 1 0
J.Bond: Agent Under Fire
Jak & Daxter
Jedi Knight 2
K = 1 1
Knockout Kings 2002
L = 1 2
LMA Manager 2001 & 2002
Louvre: The Final Curse
Luigi's Mansion
M = 1 3
Martian Gothic
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Max Payne
Maximo
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor Underground
Medal of Honor: Allied Assault
MediEvil 1 & 2
Metal Gear Solid
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club
Mummy Returns
N = 1 4
Necronomicon
No-One Lives Forever
O = 1 5
Onimusha: Warlords
007 Agent Under Fire
Operation Winback
P = 1 6
Parasite Eve 2
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Pro Evolution Soccer
Project Eden
Project Gotham Racing
R = 1 8
Rainbow Six
Rayman 1, 2 & Advance
Red Faction
Res. Evil: Code Veronica
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Resident Evil 1, 2 & 3
Robot Wars
Rogue Leader
S = 1 9
S Palmer's Snowboarder
Shadow Man 1 & 2
Silent Hill
Silent Hill 2
Sims
Smackdown! 3: J. Bring It
Smash Court Tennis
Smugglers Run 2
Soldier of Fortune 1 & 2
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Soul Reaver 2
Spiderman 1 & 2
Spiderman The Movie
Spyro 3: Year of Dragon
SSX Tricky
Star Wars Jedi P. Battles
Star Wars Jedi Starfighter
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Phantom M.
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
State of Emergency
Super Smash Bros Melee
Syphon Filter 1, 2 & 3
T = 2 0
Tekken Tag Tournament
The World is not Enough
Theme Park World
This is Football 2002
Time Splitters
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's S'boarding
V = 2 2
V-Rally 3
W = 2 3
World is not Enough
World's S. Police Chases
WRC: World Rally Champ
WWF Smackdown 2
WWF Smackdown 3 J.B.I.
WWF War Zone
Z = 2 6
Zelda
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
0-9 = 2 7
007 Agent Under Fire

THE ABOVE LIST IS JUST A SELECTION OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE

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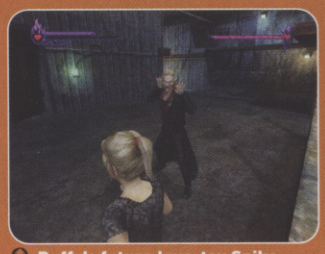
BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER PLAYER'S GUIDE

Vampires a pain in the neck? **Joff Brown** tackles the tricky bits

1 SPIKE

Beating Spike at the Bronze is the first real challenge you encounter, and he can be one really tough opponent if you aren't sufficiently confident in what you're doing. When he's blocking your attacks, make sure you don't go into a combo, or he'll hit you when you're done. Instead, just back off and let him come to you. If you can hit him just as he's about to attack, you'll be able to get in a quick combo.

It isn't possible for you to stake him at the end – well, it would spoil the show a bit, wouldn't it? To get to the exit he uses after you defeat him, climb up the newly opened area, run round until you're opposite it, then shimmy across.



Buffy's future love-toy Spike here is totally lethal

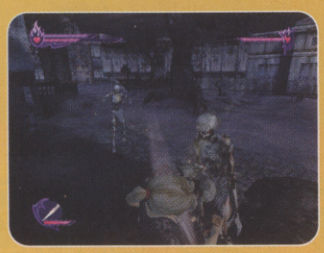
Work off all that pent-up aggression and latent desire, Buff!

2 CEMETERY

Compared to vampires, zombies aren't too hard to kill. They need to be beheaded instead of staked, and a good combo will often do the trick. Look out for when you've knocked their arms and legs off, but they're not dead. They'll hang around on the floor ready to bite you. It won't usually do much damage, but in the middle of a fight, it can be annoying.

These guys don't like the dead at all

At the end of the cemetery, you'll fight trashy-looking vampire Scylla for the first time. Make sure you don't let her block all your moves, especially after she gets up from being hit. Keep close or she'll send out missile attacks. You should deal with her quicker than you did with Spike. Be warned: she gets a bit harder next time you meet.



Check the tombs for hidden extras when not fighting zombies

3 ANGEL'S MANSION

These screamer demons aren't a big threat, but they do block hits. Vary your attacks to keep hitting them. Stake them to destroy them completely.

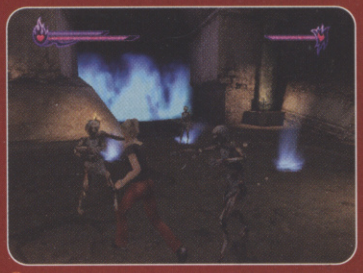
Once you've killed a few and progressed to the back garden, throw the female vamp into the sunlight to kill it, then go through the furthest door. On your left is a door with a green marker. Go the other way and in the next room you'll find a green key. The door on your left will take you to a crossroads. The left-hand door is where you need to put the green stone, and later the red and blue ones. The other two stones are inside the house – break open all the windows to get easy kills.

Once you're through the last door, break the windows and go outside to find the holy water font. Fill, it, jump back in and use it on the soul barrier.

The Hanoch demons are rarely lethal, but they're annoying

Should have bought some factor 3000 suncream, eh?

You should know how to take effective care of the zombies by now



Send old Matereani back to the land of the dead where he belongs, pronto

4 MATEREANI THE NECROMANCER

This character can be a bit of a slippery customer. Try to deal with the dead he summons as quickly as you can, and you should find yourself with time to get a few good blows in. Each individual blow won't do that much damage in itself, but you'll get there in the end.

When Matereani the Necromancer is in range, go for *him*, not the zombies, or you'll get lumbered with killing them forever. He's a pretty good hand-to-hand fighter, so keep your attacks short and sweet.

If he starts using his hand-jab attacks (we said jab!), then back off and try to approach him again.

5 SCYLLA 2

After her monstrous transformation, she'll charge straight for you. Watch out for her lunge attacks. She's relatively easy to wear down, but you won't kill her without a bit of help from Mr Sun. When you have a chance, press the green button on one side of the hall. It will open up the central space to the sunlight. Now all you need to do is pummel her into it and watch her burn!

Ooh, don't fancy yours much at all: kill the snake lady, kill her!

Warm, radiant sunlight is the key to killing this vampire

Giant vampires: bad for your health

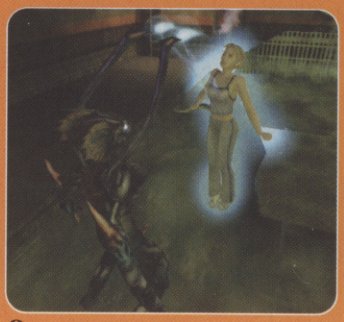
6 DOCKS: LOADING AREA

Things start to get really tough from this point. Those giant vamps are easily hit but they're hard to bring down. When you've sorted out the first lot, save the man from the next vamp for a bonus item. There's an Elixir in the room to the right, but another vampire will attack as you exit. Try to take out the first two in the warehouse separately; hang around in the entrance so only one sees you. Flick the switch on the conveyor belt and go through the wrong way when there's a space between boxes. Take care of the vampires on the other side and take the lift up. Flick the switch and head back down, but be ready for more at the bottom. Fight through to the next stage of the docks. Flick the switch then jump the boxes to get through.

Use the conveyor belt to get through, avoiding boxes

7 SIRENS

Sirens are nasty creatures. Stay far away and they'll blast you with their sonic beam. Get up close and they'll throw you, often into the water. Fortunately, they're also very vulnerable to fire attacks, so save any hellfire arrows for them and get them before they get close. Otherwise, you'll need to use the reaper on them just as they attack. It's a risky strategy, but once you get one blow in, you'll be able to follow it up with more straight away, so just keep at it and be sure to stay away from narrow walkways near the water.

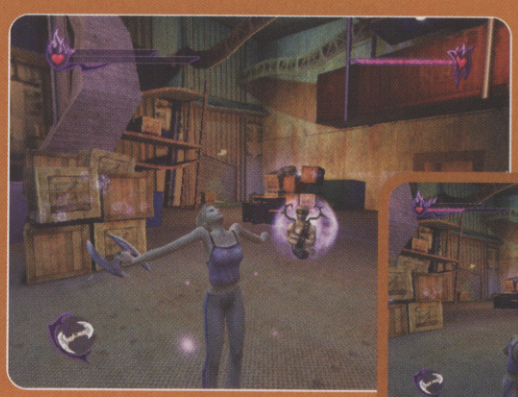


Ugly, ain't they? And hard to kill too

Use that reaper for easy destruction

8 URD THE DREAM DEMON

The only time you can hit this S&M freak is when he's powering up for a special blast attack and his shield is down. Don't stay too near him though, or he'll bump you with his energy field. Jump away when he tries it, but then be on the lookout for his giant shaft of light. It'll do lots of damage. Don't try hitting with more than one combo because you'll just get zapped. Hang back and wait for your chance. Fortunately, even normal combos do a fair amount of damage to him.

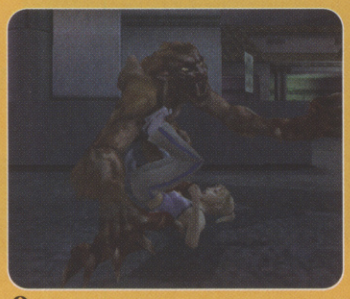


Stay away from those lethal demon spells or you'll pay

Pay back the bondage dude, Buffy-style

9 MALIK THE TIGER VAMP

He's no pushover, this one. Keep close and keep attacking at all times. When he teleports and you're in the middle of an attack, you'll manage to hit him if he tries to swipe you from his new location. When he's worn out, the only way to kill him is to stake him through the chest – and it can be done. If you don't have a stake on you, there's one at the bottom of the stairs, to your left. Don't be surprised if it takes you a while though.



Blimey. Feel the call of the wild

Get those hits in. Grrreat!

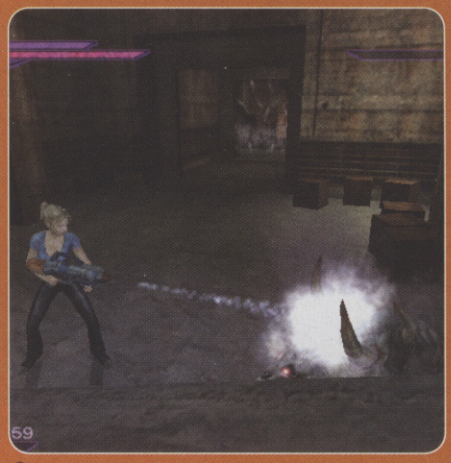
Looks like a wuss? Don't be fooled

10 SUNKEN CHURCH: TUNNELS

Don't waste any precious holy water here, as you'll need it to get through the soul barriers. If you're using it to kill vamps, refuel before you get too far or you'll have to backtrack all the way.

Press the third then second buttons to cross the bridge, and when you're at the first chasm, shimmy across. Oops – your first super-screamer demon. These guys evade lots of attacks, but if you're in trouble, just keep kicking and some of your attacks will eventually get through.

Pursued by their firebolts? The trick is to hit the demon who sent them and they'll disappear. Now shimmy across the left-hand side of the second chasm to the platform. There's another soul barrier ahead. If you've used too much holy water, remember that the Scooby gang gave you a vial at the start of the level... phew.



Ah, holy water, that old chestnut. Comes in handy and works a particular treat on demon dogs

Power up before you begin or you'll waste time

11 SUNKEN CHURCH: BRIDGE

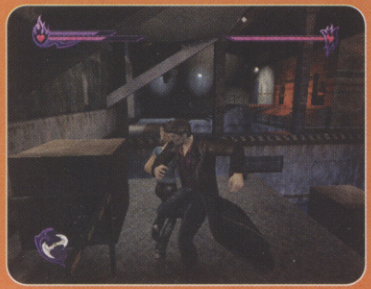
Here you just need to get to the end of the bridge, flick the switch at the top right-hand side of the area, then flick the two switches on either side of the main gate. Trouble is, you'll be beset by demons on every side. If you explore the area to the right of the bridge, you'll find a hellfire font and, back down towards the start of the bridge, an Elixir. There's another one on the ledge to the far left, and much-needed hellfire arrows behind a breakable wall under the right-hand staircase. Save those arrows for the onslaught after you flick the switch at the top of the level.

Nice view but that's a nasty journey ahead

Super-screamers can be a huge pain in the jacksie

12 ANGEL

This lover's tiff is pretty simple to resolve. If you stray too far, he'll blast you with telekinetic lightning like a vampire possessed (which he is).



As expected, this soft vamp buckled

"Ooh Buffy, I love you but I'm possessed... whine whine..."

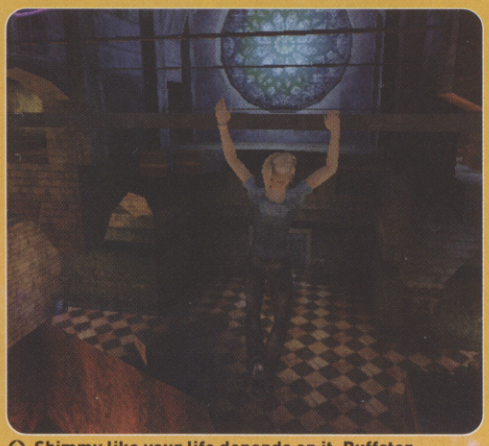
Angel exaggerates his assets again

Keep close enough to hit him, especially when he jumps at you. Push him in the water and he'll just reappear. The reaper blade isn't much help, sadly, so punch and kick your way to victory.

13 SUNKEN CHURCH: EAST WING

When you get to the east wing of the sunken church, fill up on hellfire, but whatever you do, don't use it on this level after you've shimmied across and pushed the switch. Unless you've been collecting hellfire vials, you'll need it in a while.

Use the rail to shimmy across the area with the giant stained-glass window, because the ground's shaky there. Then it's one more demon to kill, and you're through. In the main hall of the sunken church, before you meet the Master, pick up the Elixir in the cave to your left.



Shimmy like your life depends on it, Buffster

Nice welcoming committee. Kick their demon brains

14 DREAMERS' REALM: ISLANDS

This might take a few goes to get right, as there's no saving until the end.

First, grab the stone key in front of you, put it in the circular room ahead, and kill the two demons to open up the gate. Jump down the steps, pick up the second stone and head up the transparent stairs. Kill the four demons in the next area and run past the swinging blades. Pick up the stone, then hang off the first ledge until you can climb up under the blade. Get back to the centre again, and unlock the last area. The sequence of those stones is complex, but look for the time when the first two are 'pavement side' up and the third's the other way up. As this configuration approaches, you should have time to jump across. Don't hurry or you'll fail.

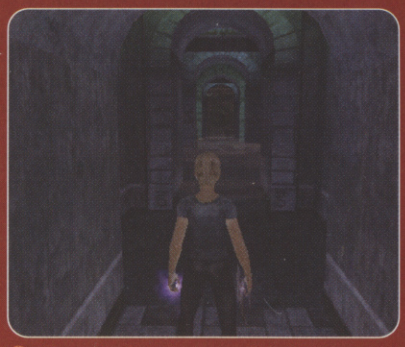
Problems killing Dark Buffy at the end of the level? If you wear her out, you won't be able to stake or slice her, no matter what you do. In fact, all she needs is a dose of hellfire from your super-soaker.

Trippy islands, tricky level too

One false move and it's bye-bye Buffy

15 DREAMERS' REALM: MAZE

This looks confusing, but in fact there are only a few switches you have to flick. If you get lost, just look for the door you started at to re-orientate yourself. First, go straight ahead (we'll call it north), then west to find the first red switch. Equip the Talisman and you'll see it glow. Press the switch, then head west and south and you'll see another switch on the right-hand side. Press it, then press the next switch to escape and fight the demon.



Where the hell do you go? We'll tell you

Find your way back to the start and take the first right-hand passage to find another switch. Press it, then find the chasm in the northwest corner of the maze. You can now jump it and press a switch on the other side. Use the moving platform to find a secret or backtrack to the start and go right again. Fight two demons and you're through.

16 SKULD AND VERDANDI

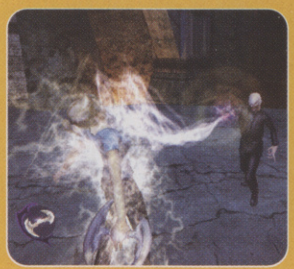
The key is to get through the fight with Skuld with enough energy, weapons and slayer power to defeat Verdandi. They're both easily hurt by crossbow bolts, so let rip if you've got any left. Skuld relies on zooming in to hit you. Holy water won't help you much, but the hellfire works slightly better. The reaper's not much use on Skuld either, but normal kicks will do a bit of damage if you're desperate.

When his leg/arm things tremble, he's about to hit you, so jump to the side if you can. Then you'll make it to Verdandi, the last of the dream demons. He'll fire missiles at you and zoom in for the kill as well. You can avoid the spells by hiding behind the pillars, and the close-range attacks by jumping away. To kill Verdandi, build up slayer power by killing the zombies. Then throw your reaper when he's powering up a spell.

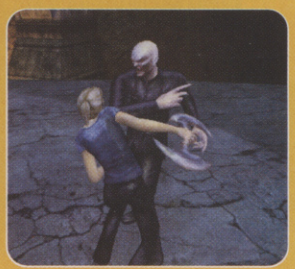
Ugh. Mind those mantis-like claws

Get away from this Big Bad. Quick

His zombies give you more power



The Master: ugly, dangerous... and a bit camp



Probably wouldn't win prizes for the nicest man in the world

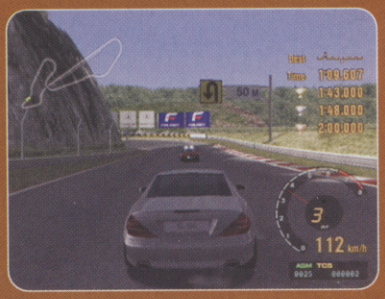
17 THE MASTER

Before you go into the final battle, be sure to pick up the stake and the Elixir to the right of the fonts. Now it's time for the final confrontation. If you use the holy water or hellfire, it'll only do minimal damage and he'll immediately assume his spirit form. Don't try to harm the Master when he's in spook mode. In fact, don't even go near him or he'll zap you with evil magic. Don't stay in one place or you'll be thrown into the pit. You can get in some nice, satisfying combos when he's embodied though, so lay into him and whatever you do, don't forget that stake... Good luck!

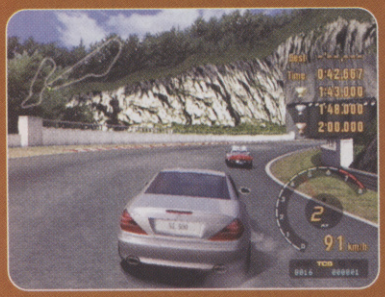
GRANTURISMO CONCEPT2002 TOKYO-GENEVA PLAYER'SGUIDE

Head to the winner's podium with Alex Huhtala's GT driving school

1 It's best to complete all the Course License Tests first, beating the Gold Cup time for each course, as this will unlock 20 new cars. Among this selection will be one particular vehicle that will make completing the rest of the game a whole lot easier. Before we get to that though, some tips on the Course Licences.



The Pace Car may be slower than you, but at least it sticks to the racing line



Follow the Pace Car until you've learnt the course like the back of your hand

You need to tackle each course with the Pace Car turned on. Following the pace car will allow you to view the racing line on each corner. It's also an easy way of learning the tracks.

Once you feel sufficiently confident that you have learned the correct racing line, you should be able to overtake the Pace Car and speed off to the finishing line.

2 Don't underestimate the value of continually using your rear mirror, located at the top of the screen, especially if there are opponents creeping up behind you. If you take a corner badly, or are being done for straight-line speed by a rival, don't be scared to play dirty. Use the computer driver's reluctance to stray from the racing line to your advantage.

Crashing into the back of an opponent at speed isn't wholly advisable, as the nudge will increase their speed and reduce yours. However, when you're out in front of an opponent and are the one being nudged, the same thing will happen. You can use this to your advantage. Also, don't be afraid to check the mirror and block to gain the upper hand on the track.

Blocking your opponents isn't cheating at all – it's called tactics, y'know!

It's useful on corners if you give yourself a nudge faster

In the slower Pacific or Europe groups, whatever car you pick, the field will always be an even match

3 The car you choose for each race determines the opponents you'll be racing against. You can use this to your advantage if you're having difficulty finishing first in a Single Race.

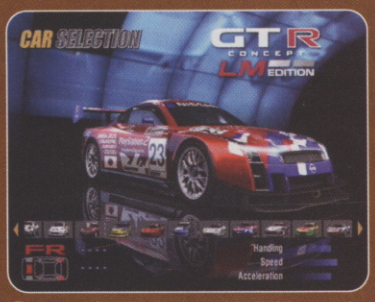
Instead of picking from the Concept, Dream or Racing groups of cars, go for the slower Pacific or Europe groups. The cars in these two fields are lower performance and are therefore more evenly matched. By choosing from these two groups you're competing less against speed; instead the main challenge comes down to driver ability and finding the best line around the course. If you're still being beaten, take a note of what vehicles are finishing ahead of you and whether the leader of the pack won by a clear margin. If it did, pick that car next time.

This is the same difficulty level and circuit, but this time a faster car has been selected

4

When starting the Single Race at Normal Level, you can really pick any car as the competition is so weak at this setting. It may be a mum's car but the Honda Civic Type R is a good all-rounder too. Its acceleration and top speed enables it to cut right through the competition.

The Civic Type R is good for GT Concept – and also for running to the shops



Race the GTR Concept LM Edition, and you won't want to try anything else!

For a game-winner though, head to the Autumn Ring License Test and beat the Gold Cup time. This unlocks the Nissan GTR Concept LM Edition in the Dream car line-up. This car will tear up the competition in the Normal and Professional Levels and even a few of the Ace Levels without any tinkering under the bonnet whatsoever.

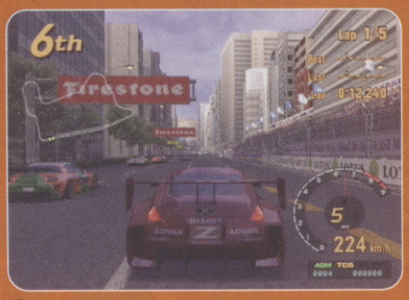
5

Once you've completed all the License Tests and been placed first in all the Normal and Professional Levels, including the Pod Race, you are able to unlock the Ace difficulty level.

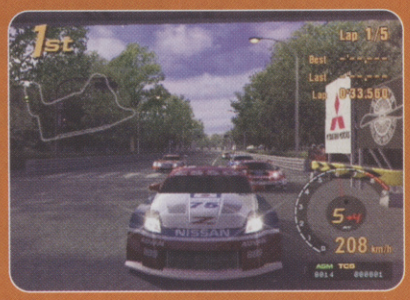
This is the stage of the game where the competition really starts to step up significantly and you'll need your game face firmly in place.

You'll need to choose a fast car just to keep up with the pack, let alone get ahead of it. Again, the Nissan GTR nearly cuts it here, but it can't quite match the pace on the quick Tokyo R246 circuit. The Nissan FairladyZ LM is slightly faster but has the same excellent handling and acceleration. Then there's a whole bunch of excellent race model Toyotas, Hondas and again more Nissans, all in the Racing selection.

If this fails, don't worry, because you can always tinker with your vehicle settings (see box 8).



The FairladyZ LM has the speed required to stay with the pack at Ace level



It also has the power to stay in front

6

Rally driving requires different skills to street racing, with the timing of turning and braking essential to success. First, turning: in rally driving, you'll always start turning the wheel in advance of of the bend. Most bends are also very wide, allowing you to put the car into a slide to maintain speed through the dirt. To slide, brake and then turn into the bend, then accelerate away in the direction opposite to the bend. This allows you to powerslide or drift through a corner.

There are times, such as in the middle section of Tahiti Maze, when you'll need to be wary of excessive drifting. Until you unlock something better, the Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII is an excellent choice for any Rally course.

A rally car that does just what you ask

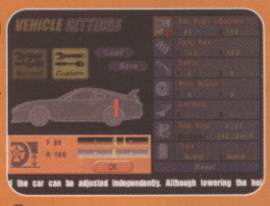
Slip sliding away on the Tahiti Maze

Can't deny the Ford GT40 is frighteningly fast, but it really sucks at taking corners

7

Tuning was an important factor in previous Gran Turismo games. Less so in Concept, although there are a few improvements to make cornering at speed a lot easier.

Take the Ford GT40 LM Edition for example, a very fast car on the straights, but useless on corners, especially on the Tokyo R246 circuit. Ride Height and Spring Rate are the two key adjustments you need to consider to give a car extra stability on corners. Whenever you lower the Ride Height, increase the Spring Rate and this will create extra downforce. A softer tyre will also increase cornering ability but they deteriorate a lot faster than a standard tyre.



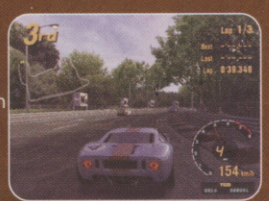
First required adjustment: reduce the Ride Height

When you change the Ride Height, don't forget to adjust the springs at the same time

8

Lowering the level of Brake Balance will also increase cornering ability, although obviously it reduces the braking strength. If you tend to brake in corners you may also want to increase the rear brakes over the front. This will reduce the chance of the car sliding out.

When adjusting the Gear Ratio, the further you go to the right will increase acceleration, while reducing the top speed. Finding the right balance can be tricky as every car is different. In the GT40's case, it's very fast on the straights but can be left behind when powering away from a corner. Therefore it's a good idea to gain some extra acceleration.



After adjustment, corners are taken much more easily

REVIEWS

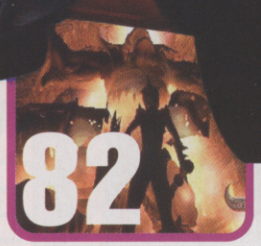
THIS MONTH

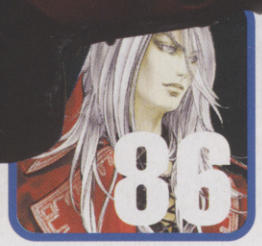
Playing games in the summer months can be a challenge in itself. Not only do you have your mates hassling you for a massive round of water-ballooning the neighbours' dog, you also have to contend with the unbearable heat of your tiny bedroom stuffed like a Currys showroom with humming electrical equipment.

Playing GBA in the sun is clearly the answer but, despite plenty of releases, there's no killer handheld game this month. You could check which games you don't already own in our GBA Top Fives, or you could always pore over CVG's massive first reviews of Resident Evil and Stuntman instead. Big game releases are a rarity in the summer so trust CVG to pull off not one but TWO of 'em!

Lee Skittrell
Games Editor

LEE





PS2 Stuntman → 76
GBA Scooby Doo → 80
PS2 Men In Black II → 80
GBA Go! Go! Beckham! → 81
XB Enclave → 82
PS Delta Force: Urban Warfare → 84
XB Hunter: The Reckoning → 85
GBA Tiger Woods Golf → 86
GBA Castlevania: Harmony Of Dissonance → 86
GBA Dragon Ball Z → 87
GBA Maniac Racers → 88
GBA Arcade Classics → 88
PS2 Transworld Surf → 89
PC Agassi Tennis → 90
GC Zoocube → 90
PC Gore: Ultimate Soldier → 91
PC Operation Flashpoint: Resistance → 92
PS2 Freekstyle → 94
GBA King Of Fighters EX → 96
GBA Metabots → 96
PS2 Dino Stalker → 98
GBA Spirit → 99

CVG SCORES

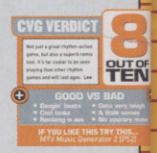
A great game is a great game, right? Yet some of you would be as pleased as a pooch with two choppers to spend weeks collecting dog tags in MGS2, but would rather eat poodle eggs than spend one minute on Final Fantasy X, and vice versa. That doesn't make one better than the other; they're just different genres for different tastes. It's why so many of us love games.

Which is where CVG comes in. We play the rubbish games so you don't have to. We review only the biggest, best or most significant releases of the month. And our scores are based on one key measure: fun. It's that simple.

Alex Simmons.
Editor

WHAT THE SCORES MEAN

1/10 Why, God, why?
2/10 Stinks. Never play this
3/10 A waste of your money
4/10 Maybe rent, never buy
5/10 Very average
6/10 Fairly solid but nowt special
7/10 Tasty
8/10 Quality game. Consider buying it
9/10 Class on a disc
10/10 An absolute must that defines the genre



CVG AWARDS

These accolades don't get dished out just because a game gets a certain score. They're CVG's way of telling you which are our pet hates and personal favourites.

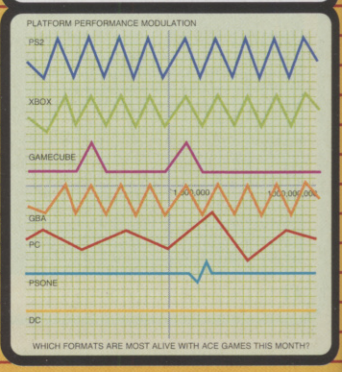
CVG ESSENTIAL
The most coveted award a game can get. It's worth buying the console to play the game

CVG RECOMMENDED
A damn good game. It may not break the mould, but it's a cut above the rest

CVG GAME OF THE MONTH
Doesn't have to be the highest scorer, but it's CVG's pick of the bunch this month

CVG STINKER
More abominable than a Yeti

FLATLINE



CVG TOP FIVES

We've seen a lot of quality games in the quarter of a century since the debut of Space Invaders. Videogames' Hall of Fame is packed with undisputed classics of their time and format. But with gaming technology and players' expectations ever changing, what are today's best games? That's exactly what the lists below are there to tell you.

CVG's mini bible of the greatest games for the latest systems

If you can't find any new releases that pickle your gherkin in this month's Reviews section, then check the games below – they're the very best games around right now for the formats in question.

And if you can't decide what new games system to buy, again, check the games below – if there aren't any on one particular format that you want to play, then simply choose another format.

Each issue we'll update our lists to include any new releases worth including, and no doubt every month some of you will be sufficiently outraged by our choices to write in and complain...

KEY

PS2 | XBOX | GBA | GC | PC | PS | DC | OTHER FORMAT | D DEVELOPER | P PUBLISHER | £ PRICE | I CVG ISSUE NO. | NP NO. PLAYERS | NEW ENTRY | B BUDGET GAME

PS2

GRAND THEFT AUTO III
D DMA P Take 2 £ 39.99 B I 241 NP 1
A violent, utterly amoral criminal masterpiece, following in the best tradition of videogames

METAL GEAR SOLID 2
D Konami P Konami £ 39.99/ I 244 NP 1
Cinematic stealth action elevated to an art form, just cut a tad too short

GT3: A-SPEC
D Polyphony P Sony £ 20 B I 237 NP 2
Quality handling and looks, plus it's a game that lasts longer than most real motors. Probably

PES
D KCET P Konami £ 39.99 I 240 NP 8
Aka ISS Pro Evo 3. Fast, well-balanced footie that rewards dedication

VF4
D Sega AM2 P Sony £ 39.99 I 246 NP 2
Hidden depths make this fighter more a way of life than a mere videogame. Even better than we first thought

XBOX

HALO
D Bungie P Microsoft £ 44.99 I 242 NP 16
Luscious looks, clever enemies and a neat storyline. Best console first-person shooter yet

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
D Neversoft P Activision £ 44.99 I 245 NP 2
Improved trick system and environments. The definitive extreme sports experience

DEAD OR ALIVE 3
D Team Ninja P Microsoft £ 44.99 I 243 NP 4
Fantastic-looking fighter, a bit gimmicky, but nevertheless solid stuff for all standards of player

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING
D Bizarre P Microsoft £ 44.99 I 243 NP 4
More accessible take on Dreamcast's seminal MSR, with added Ferrari-smashing goodness

AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING
D Microsoft P Microsoft £ 44.99 I 242 NP 4
Snowboarding sim with impressive freedom to roam and an innovative Career mode

GAMECUBE

SUPER MONKEY BALL
D AV/Sega P Infogrames £ 39.99 I 246 NP 4
Cute, hardcore, vertigo-inducing thumb-teaser with loads of modes and plenty of replayability

LUIGI'S MANSION
D Nintendo P Nintendo £ 39.99 I 246 NP 1
Repetitive but unquestionably charming and original ghost-sucking, puzzle-busting adventure

PIKMIN
D Nintendo P Nintendo £ 39.99 I 248 NP 1
Imaginative action-strategy played against the clock, with touches of Miyamoto genius

STAR WARS ROGUE LEADER
D Factor 5 P LucasArts £ 44.99 I 246 NP 1
Great-looking, if highly derivative, thrill-a-minute thumb-masher that's so very Wars

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE
D Hal Laboratory P Nintendo £ 39.99 I 247 NP 4
Painfully fast fighter or homage to all things Nintendo? Both, though a bit niche

GBA

GOLDEN SUN
D Camelot/Nintendo P Nintendo £ 29.99 I 244 NP 2
Polished role-player by any standards, all the more impressive on handheld. Incredible

ADVANCE WARS
D Nintendo/Intelligenre P Nintendo £ 29.99 I 240 NP 4
Stunning turn-based strategy game rammed with hidden bonuses. Still a CVG obsession

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT
D Nintendo P Nintendo £ 29.99 I 239 NP 4
Racer recapturing the brilliance of earlier outings, though with a few controversial tweaks here and there

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE 2
D Nintendo P Nintendo £ 29.99 I 244 NP 4
More classic Mario magic given the GBA makeover, this time of the platform persuasion

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3
D Vicarious P Activision £ 34.99 I 246 NP 4
Technically impressive. Loadsa challenges and tricks but the isometric viewpoint can sometimes be slightly awkward

PC

MEDAL OF HONOR: ALLIED ASSAULT
D 2015 P EA £ 29.99 I 243 NP 32
Class scripting, enemy AI and the WWII setting make for a tense if plot-light FPS

CIVILIZATION III
D Firaxis P Infogrames £ 29.99 NP 1
Videogaming crack. Complex, formulaic but so immersive it can mess with your emotions

OPERATION FLASHPOINT
D Bohemia P Codemasters £ 29.99 (Gold Edition) I 236 NP 16
Bit cack-looking but quality war sim that'd convert a hippy to the art of soldiering

SYSTEM SHOCK 2
D Irrational P EA £ 19.99 (Compilation) B I 216 NP 1
Well-plotted role-player shooter adventure-cum-chiller with the atmosphere Deus Ex lacks

HALF-LIFE
D Valve P Vivendi I 206 £ 9.99 B NP 16
Dated but still a byword for classy, story-driven shooters, better than many new releases – even today

PERSONAL RECOMMENDATION

This month: **Chun Wah Kong**, Sony

Chun Wah Kong, lead designer, The Getaway, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe

KUNG FU MASTER (ARCADE)
D Irem P Data East £ 100 (+ cabinet, ebay.com) or MAME NP 1
"First beat 'em up I fell in love with and it's all action from the drop of a coin. I find it really satisfying taking out the first wave of henchmen with a single flying kick..."

DOUBLE DRAGON (ARCADE)
D Technos P Taito £ 200 (+ cabinet, ebay.com) NP 2
"Remember the knee-to-the-face move in this game? Timing your kicks to intercept the knives thrown at you? A brilliant finale makes this a fabulous, fabulous game!"

STREET FIGHTER 2 (ARCADE)
D Capcom P Capcom £ 230 (+ cabinet, ebay.com) NP 2
"Loved the original with the punching pads, must have spent a fortune on the second. What else can be said about this game that hasn't been said already? Memories of my college days..."

TETRIS (GAME BOY)
D Bullet Proof Software P Nintendo £ 3 approx. (ebay.com) NP 2
"Never liked it until I got it again on the Game Boy. From then on I played it to death for months on end. Played it on the bus, on the train, on the bog."

IKARI WARRIORS (ARCADE)
D SNK P Tradewest £ 2 (NES version) (ebay.com) NP 2
"Loved the games that used to have the eight-way rotational sticks and this was the best one! No ray guns, no homing missiles, just good ol' machine guns and grenades."

BEST IMPORT

SUPER MARIO SUNSHINE
D Nintendo P NIntendo £ £69.99 (Japanese Import) UK release: Oct NP 1
Yes, by the time you read this page, you'll be able to buy the greatest Mario adventure ever created – on import. Like us, in fact. Hoorah!

CVG THE REVIEWERS

Meet the team that nine out of ten gamers would swap jobs with

TEKKEN 4 FIGHTER OF CHOICE?	KING	CHRISTIE	YOSIMITSU	LAW	KAZUYA	HWOARANG	MARDUK	MARK	STEVE
WHO ARE YOU?	**Lee Skittrell, Acting Games Editor**	**Maura Sutton, Freelance**	**Mike Cooper, Staff Writer**	**Dean Scott, Freelance**	**Alex Simmons, Editor**	**Joff Brown, Freelance**	**Jimmy Francis, Staff Writer**	**Mark Hill, Freelance**	**Richie Shoemaker, Freelance**
PLAYING FOR PLEASURE?	Super Mario Sunshine Super Mario Advance 2 Stuntman	Resident Evil Gore Munch's Oddysee	Super Mario Sunshine MoH: Frontline ZOE	GunGrave Winning Eleven 6 Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram	Super Mario Sunshine MoH: Frontline Winning Eleven 6	Ape Escape 2 Frequency Super Monkey Ball	Super Monkey Ball Pikmin Halo	Morrowind Neverwinter Nights GTA III	MGS 2 Sudden Strike II Emulations
WHAT'S HOT AND WHAT'S NOT IN GAMES THIS SUMMER?	**IN:** *"Racoons"* **OUT:** *"Trick Meters"*	**IN:** *"Cool movie tie-ins like PS2 Spidey"* **OUT:** *"Lame movie tie-ins like GBA Star Wars"*	**IN:** *"Backpacks and hexagons"* **OUT:** *"Moles with bottle glasses"*	**IN:** *"Shoot 'em ups"* **OUT:** *"Cel-shading by anyone other than Sega or Nintendo"*	**IN:** *"Robots"* **OUT:** *"Pokémon. Although the Trading Card game is still selling"*	**IN:** *"Supposedly 'gritty' squad-based shooters"* **OUT:** *"Cack footie World Cup rip-offs"*	**IN:** *"Zelda – there'll be no barbecues all summer long"* **OUT:** *"Puzzle games"*	**IN:** *"Goblins and beardy dwarves"* **OUT:** *"Original ideas"*	**IN:** *"Monkeys"* **OUT:** *"Star Wars"*

STUNTMAN

Soar and spin through the year's most memorable videogame

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £39.99
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
OUT: SEPT 6
DEVELOPER: REFLECTIONS
URL: WWW.STUNTMAN-GAME.COM

The barrel roll is arguably the best stunt in the whole wide world

The precision driving tests in the Driving Games mode help hone skills

Take down the bridge simply by driving through the supports

We wouldn't recommend a career as a top-drawer Hollywood stuntman. Aside from the daily, very real threat of breaking your head, think of the inferiority complex you could develop.

You perform the stunts deemed too risky for the actors. They're irreplaceable. You are not. Apparently, the big movie studios would hate for the stars to get smashed up, but are quite happy for some poor goon to strap himself into a car and then go barrel-rolling at 100mph through the air.

It's enough to cause serious psychological trauma, as well as a troubling addiction to the adrenalin rush of pulling the most awe-inspiring stunts this side of the latest Bond movie – or it is if the action seen in Stuntman is anything to go by. It's a quest to prove yourself a worthy stuntman to the Hollywood movie honchos. It's the wildest driving ride you'll find on PS2. It's the long-awaited Stuntman, and it kicks serious tailpipe.

PS2

The real-time damage means there's loads of debris

HOT SHOT!

CVG GAME OF THE MONTH

This cannon gives you a scary speed boost for maximum air. Faster, man, faster!

ICON VS ICON

There are some amazing stunts to pull in the game, but don't expect to jump right to the top of the Hollywood stunt pile. You're gonna have to work your way up through the ranks, punk.

The main Career mode is split into six different movies. In each movie there are a number of stunt sequences to perform, each one forming one level or mission. Throughout each mission, the director shouts the stunt

MULTIPLEX MASSIVE

Get the lowdown on the six different movies waiting for you to stunt through in Stuntman. There's loads of variation, not just between the movies themselves, but also between the types of challenge that pop up from one stage to the next within the same film.

Docklands never looked so grey and grotty than in this cool crime caper

Tame the streets of America's Deep South in this tongue-in-cheek action yarn

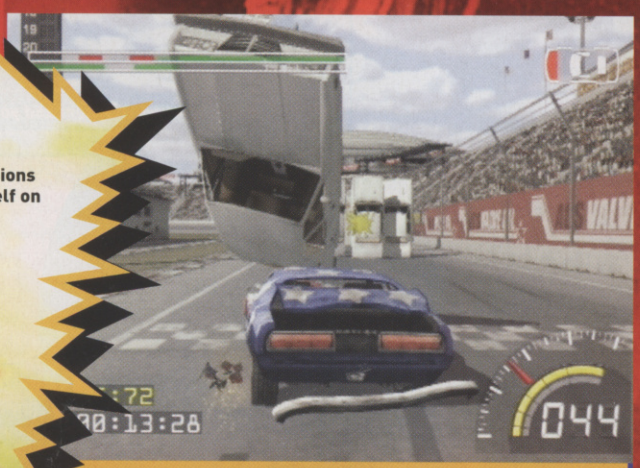
John Woo would be proud after watching this brutal action adventure

What you get when you cross bestselling writers John Grisham and Tom Clancy

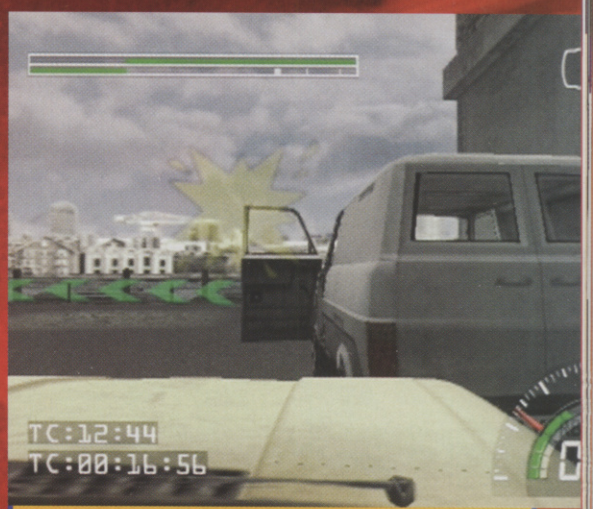
No Indy or Lara here, but don't worry, there are still plenty of tombs to raid

Did someone say Bond? It's the ultimate stunt movie and the final film of the game

Driving near to explosions without setting yourself on fire is a valuable skill



Knock cars down like dominoes in the Arena to wow the crowd



A lesson in road safety, if ever there was one

instructions at you, accompanied by icons on the screen. These could be as simple as doing a 180° handbrake turn, or as tricky as squeezing through a gap between two oncoming trucks after leaping from the roof of a speeding train.

Each stunt acts as a kind of checkpoint, preventing the timer in the corner of the screen from running to zero and the director from kicking your butt for ruining the shoot.

Occasionally you have to activate a context-sensitive special stunt manoeuvre with the action button. Pressing L1 when you see the 'action' icon will give you a nitro boost to help you clear a giant chasm, or will shoot a blast of air beneath your chassis to help you perform that perfect flip. Stuntman uses all of the tricks of the real movie stunt world, and is about authentic as it could get without strapping you into a jumpsuit and blasting you from a cannon. Bang!

Admire your mad driving skills in the replays

THE BEST STUNTS IN THE WORLD

You start out on the low-budget British comedy crime caper Toothless In Wapping. The stunts are relatively simple – smashing boxes and making small jumps from dock to dock.

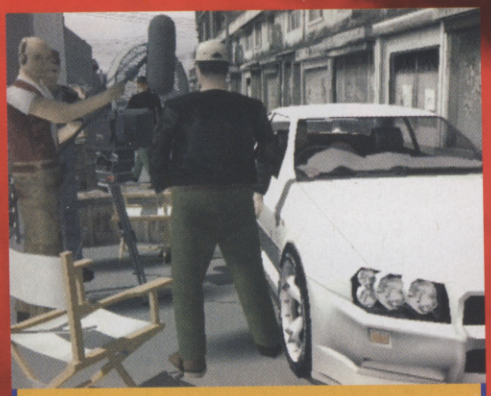
BEING A REAL STUNTMAN

BETTER THAN STUNTMAN WORSE THAN DRIVER 2

Soon you'll progress to more expensive movies and ever more challenging stunts. You'll be launching your car from ramps on two wheels as well as four. You'll give chase across wild terrain, smashing police barricades and timing your driving so you pass by pyrotechnic explosions for maximum dramatic effect.

Later still you'll make jumps across moving helicopters, plough through a working office building and go slip-sliding on the snow in a snowmobile while hostile microlites try to pepper your ass from above. It's awesome and there's so much variation between the stunts, and the vehicles and environments you perform them in, you'll want to persevere through the game's tougher moments just to see what surprise is up next.

Drive the jeep and frighten the soldiers on duty. Shouldn't be too difficult – they look pretty soft



The environments look great but if you stray too far, you'll see they're just fake movie sets

You even get to shoot up the scenery in this heavy tank

The explosions are awesome, even if they are staged

Tear along the pier for that Hollywood crowd-scatter effect

PAL PERFECTION

One of the biggest concerns based on early versions was that Stuntman would be too tough. Even the American game released just a couple of months ago had an imperfect difficulty balance between missions. So we take our hats off and do a cheeky curtsy to the Reflections team for spending those extra few precious weeks between the NTSC and the European release fine-tuning and honing the game so that the difficulty level is spot on. They even smoothed up the frame-rate.

Extra points for taking out the snowman? We wouldn't count on it

The game is still no pushover though. There are frustrating sections where your mind will boggle at the apparent unfairness of it all. And then you'll have 'just one more go' and figure out a different tactic, or learn the best line to take around that tricky corner. You really do get a little bit further every time you play, and it makes Stuntman one of the most addictive games of any genre on PS2.

MORE THAN STUNTS

The biggest potential gripe with Stuntman is the fact there's just a

BE A DAREDEVIL

Between each movie you can earn cash and respect by completing stunt challenges in the Stunt Arena. Cannon jumps, formation driving and fiery rings of death are all in a day's work here, and if you tire of the developer's challenges, you can make up your own. You are limited only by your imagination.

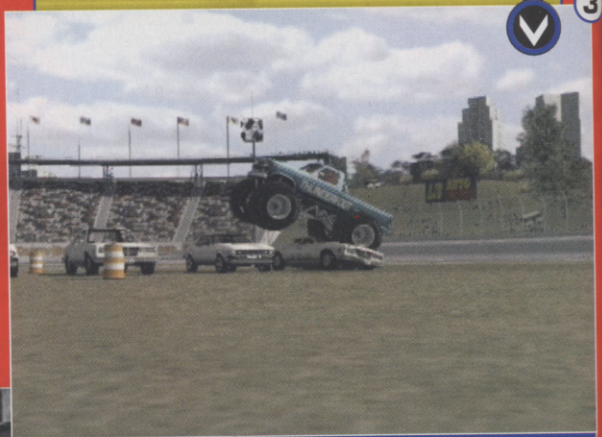
1

Hit the top car to win the respect of the eager crowd

Stay in the yellow box to drive in fabulous formation

2

3



Yes! Monster Truck mayhem and you get to sit behind the wheel

YOUR FAVOURITE STUNTS

There are so many stunts crammed into the game that everyone's going to have their own list of favourites. For some it might be the somersaulting majesty of the barrel roll, or the section where you hurtle off a flyover, through an office block and then out the other side. Here are just a few of CVG's all-time favourite awesome stunts.

Hit the pipe ramp just right to flip over onto two wheels

1

2

Drive beneath the falling chimneys. Don't get squished

3

Hit the ramp right to swoosh through the air

4

Go into and then out the back of this trailer at high speed

5

Never mind the explosion, just don't fall off the roof

single route through the game. If you get stuck, you stay stuck. Luckily, there are plenty of other modes to try until you suss it out.

As you play, you win items or 'toys' to play with in the Stunt Arena. Here you can build the ultimate stunt obstacle course. The only limits are your imagination and the amount of ramps, rings and other mad objects you've unlocked in the main game. There are Driving Games, too, offering a different type of driving challenge to the main game.

Given Relections' rich gaming heritage, Stuntman was never going to be a stinker. But even the biggest fan of the Driver series won't be prepared for just how extraordinary Stuntman is.

You can almost feel the loving attention to detail and passion for crafting in this original masterpiece leaking stickily out of the pad and all over your hands as you play.

Stuntman is beautiful to look at, amazing to play, and charged with more adrenalin and testosterone than King Kong on Red Bull. Go get it. CVG

You get to play as both the good guys and the baddies

Collect tokens for points in this stunt-based Driving Game

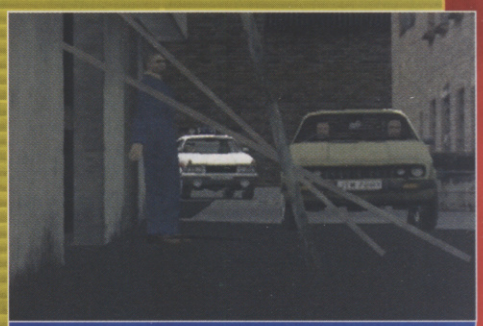
Fast car + lots of oncoming traffic = one horribly difficult level

Don't go worrying about your car's fancy paint job, just scrape that bus! You're a stuntman, for goodness sake

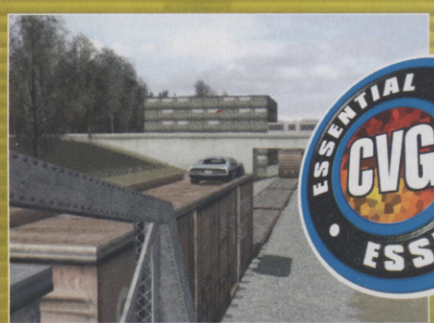
Point your bonnet at the yellow blocks

ROCKIN' REPLAYS

The replays are an integral part of the game. They help tie all of the stunts you've pulled in a single mission together, in an exciting, action-packed movie clip. You even get a complete movie trailer to goggle at when you finish a whole movie, spliced with your actual replay footage.



Replays make sense of your in-game actions



Driving on top of this train is unforgettable

The wheel-arch view adds drama to overtaking

CVG VERDICT

9 OUT OF TEN

One of PS2's most original games is now also one of the most enjoyable to play. Challenging, rewarding and totally thrilling. **Lee**

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Totally unique	It's highly likely you'll get pretty frustrated
Addictive gameplay	Very linear
Loads of game	

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS...

Driver (PSone), Project Gotham Racing (Xbox)

SCOOBY DOO

Scooby checks out some freaky faces, then Velma's ugly mug pops up on screen

Quick, call pest control!

GAME INFO BOX

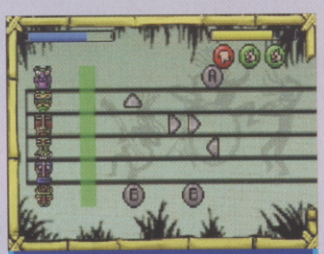
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £34.99
PUBLISHER: THQ
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: THQ
URL: WWW.THQ.COM

A locked chest! Could you need to find a key perhaps?

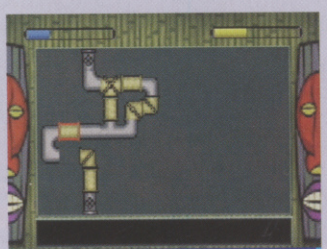
First up, we'd like to applaud the fact that THQ didn't simply choose to take the easy route. It could've created a dull side-scrolling platform game involving Scooby and Co. endlessly bouncing about, stomping ghosts and other weird comedy monsters. Instead it's come up with a dull isometric 3D mystery walk-and-talk adventure, with a handful of mediocre mini-games chucked in to spice the whole thing up. Well done.

At first glance, Scooby on GBA doesn't look too much like a dog's dinner, but once you sink your teeth into the actual adventure it quickly starts to taste like one. There are plenty of mini-mysteries to solve, objects to discover and characters to interact with in order to gather clues. But the slow pace and lack of any serious monster-bashing action results in an experience that's about as entertaining as being employed as a professional pooper-scooper.

GOLDEN SUN
BETTER THAN **SCOOBY DOO** WORSE THAN
DRINKING COLD SICK



This tricky rhythm action mini-game soon becomes tedious



Fit the different pipe shapes together to solve the puzzle

The four random mini-games, including a Pipe Mania-style game, manage to provide a tiny amount of enjoyment. Regardless, this particular movie tie-in deserves to be tied up and buried in the garden like a stinky old bone.

Nip about, avoid obstacles and collect Scooby snacks

CVG VERDICT

Let this pup loose and you're asking to get poop on your palms. **Mike**

3 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+		−	
+	The mini-games are pretty cool	−	Blocky visuals
+	Isometric viewpoint	−	Super-dull mysteries
		−	Pretty soulless

Those red flashes are a load of new enemies appearing. Damn

Those enemies are clever enough to shoot upwards – curses!

MEN IN BLACK II: ALIEN ESCAPE

Uhuh, here they come...

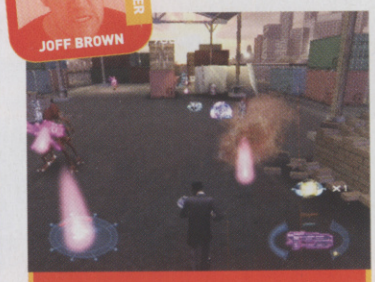
GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £39.99
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: MELBOURNE HOUSE
URL: WWW.INFOGRAMES.CO.UK

Ever wanted to be Will Smith? Better wait for someone to make a boxing game licensed from Ali then, cos this is nothing like either of the MIB movies.

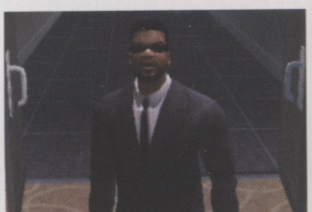
Alien Escape isn't actually based on the new film. Instead, the game features a whole new story about a convict ship that's crash-landed on Earth. You play as either Jay (fast) or Kay (two guns) on each level, and it's your job to round up (read: wipe out) the alien menace.

The minute you've destroyed all the aliens, another wave appears. Blast them all, and you'll open up a door to the next area. Then the same thing happens again. Only with even more aliens. And so on.



This is what the screen looks like the majority of the time

This boss is particularly impressive... and gross



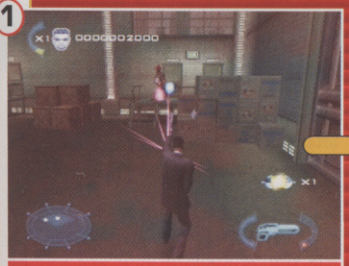
Hmm. Not the best likeness the world's ever seen, is it?

NOISY CRICKET, I CHOOSE YOU!

Alien Escape may look like a third-person action adventure, but in fact it's something a lot simpler: an old-fashioned shoot 'em up. Those aliens may be coming towards you rather than from above, but what with all the strafing from side to side, if you saw the action

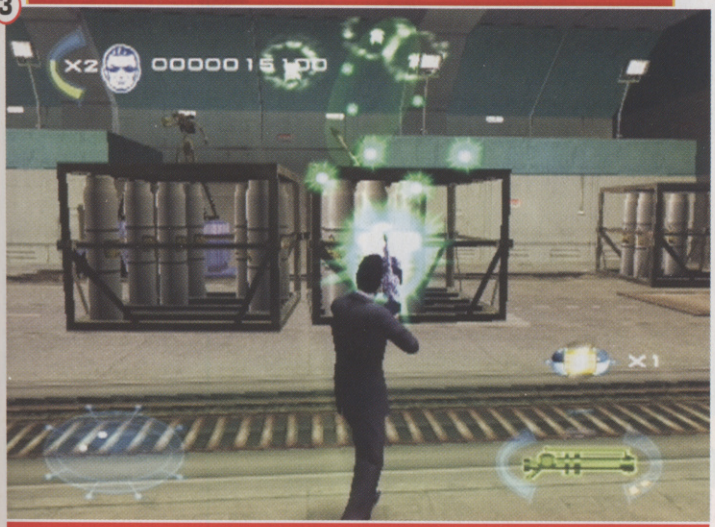
KICK E.T.'S BUTT

Just like in old space shooters, you can power up your weapon to get more kills. Get hit and you lose the power-up, although you can pick it up again. And you can swap guns to get different sorts of destruction, too. Now *that*'s what we're talkin' about.

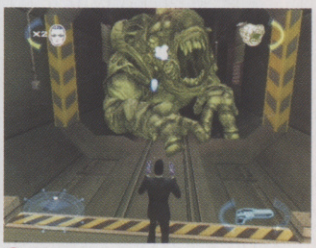
1

Your standard weapon's a paltry blaster. We can do better than that!

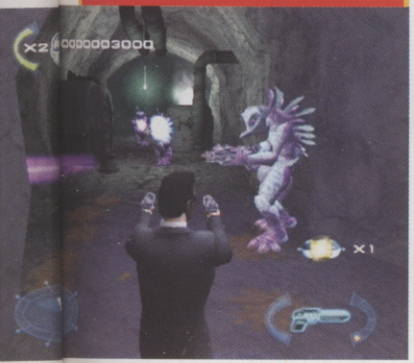
2

Power up your guns and they soon start to look a bit more lethal

3

Keep powering it up, and you'll get awesome blast effects like this

It wouldn't be an action game without some big explosions


Like your worst nightmare, he just doesn't stop coming


Aliens look good, but the same models are repeated a lot

happening from overhead, it would look an awful lot like, well... Space Invaders to be brutally honest. And just like that old game, the innocently brainless fun gets too tough too quickly. CVG

CVG VERDICT

A blast at first but gets boring. And tough as old space boots. Joff

6 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
No-nonsense action	Shooting's all you do
Frenetic shooting	Gets tough, quickly
Nice weapons	Likenesses are weak

Becks has to kick his ball into a goal at the end of each level

Knock the wind out of this giant, sour-faced, pimply blob

GO! GO! BECKHAM!

GBA

More gaga than go! go!

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-4
COST: £34.99
PUBLISHER: RAGE
OUT: AUGUST 30
DEVELOPER: DENKI
URL: WWW.RAGE.CO.UK

Chirpy Mario-style steel drum music kicks in as you enter the first cutesy level. In fact, the visuals and soundtrack are scarily similar to those of Super Mario World. However, this is where the comparisons end. Where SMW is a mammoth hardcore 2D platforming masterpiece, Go! Go! Beckham! is much more lightweight and definitely intended for young kids.

You control a pudgy baby-like caricature of Becks through a bunch of differently themed locations on Soccer Island. Armed with a football, some snazzy skills and power-ups, you boot the crap out of monsters that have been unleashed into this peaceful land by an evil geezer called Mr Woe.

The concept is ridiculous, but as a simple platforming game for kiddies it plays pretty well – as the mechanic of using a ball for a weapon and as a tool for solving very basic puzzles feels surprisingly natural.

So if you've only just progressed from Pampers to training pants, still wake mummy and daddy up on Saturday mornings by bouncing on their bed, or are just a David Beckham stalker, check it out. CVG

Hey, watch out! You've got to dodge those falling spikes

Hold down the kick button at length to boot the ball harder

Becks gets into a scuffle with a giant fat penguin

CVG VERDICT

Ideal for nippers but serious gamers: steer clear. Mike

6 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Inventive use of football to fight evil	Overall adventure is very short
Fun, mindless action	Easy to complete

ENCLAVE

This **gothic adventure** takes a **giant axe** to its Xbox opposition

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £44.99
PUBLISHER: SWING!
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: STARBREEZE STUDIOS
URL: WWW.SWING-GAMES.DE

Never mind the Grand Canyon, there's a split across the fantasy world of Enclave that makes America's geological gash look like a laughter line. A remnant from an ancient battle between good and evil, the rift separates the enclave of Celenheim from the rest of the world. From the dark abyss, the Outlanders come prowling, looking to wage a final attack against the purity of Celenheim.

You are thrown right into the heart of this new battle in a tasty new action adventure that's a bit like a medieval Max Payne, and a game that lets you be good or bad.

DIRTY DOZEN

You start the game with just one selectable fighter, a brave Knight, with whom you have to escape from a

These floaty wizards will be the bane of your life in Enclave

You want to storm that fortress, without making the dragon angry

The lush environments shimmer and glow as you explore

HEROES FOR HIRE

You need never pick a dud hero again if you pay close enough attention to our mini-guide to the warriors of Enclave.

1. The Knight. Superior hand-to-hand combat but limited ranged and magic capabilities
2. The Goblin. Lightning quick in attack, but his blows won't deal huge damage
3. The Lich. Undead warrior with cool magic skills but zero melee attacks
4. The Druid. Magic user with the ability to summon guardian beasts
5. The Huntress. Superb attacks with ranged weapons, but quite weak. She isn't able to wear heavy-duty armour either
6. The Engineer. Not much of a fighter, despite that huge hammer, but excellent at laying traps and bombs to take out enemies by surprise

XBOX

And you thought forcefields were restricted to futuristic games

Summon beasts to fight on your behalf. You may need their help

Look away if you don't want to see the final boss. Oh

REVIEWER
LEE SKITTRELL

Enclave tickles your eyes with its saucy graphics

There's a good mixture of indoor and outdoor missions

Scripted events pepper the action but mind the explosions

Not even the toughest of gallant warriors can survive a fall in the red-hot bubbling pools of molten lava

prison that's disintegrating around your ears. Soon you'll encounter a scantily clad Huntress, a beardy-weirdy druid and more, who will all join your team. There are six fighters on each side and once recruited you can pick any hero to play the next stage. You have to choose wisely though, as they all have different strengths and weaknesses.

You can also choose whether you want to fight for justice or join the forces of darkness and keep Celenheim for your own dark ends. The story changes accordingly and it's a cool twist to replay familiar levels as the bad guys you fought against earlier on.

Beautiful courtyards are home to such monstrous beasts as these

Step away from this demon if you want to live longer than two seconds

Controls are simple: one stick to move, one stick to look

Avoid the flak from above by equipping and using your shield

SIMPLE SLASHING

It may have Orcs and Halflings in it, but Enclave is much shallower than any role-player. Combat involves little more than chopping away with your sword or aiming with your bow, and puzzles are too few and too simple. It does look gorgeous though, and the fights come thick and fast.

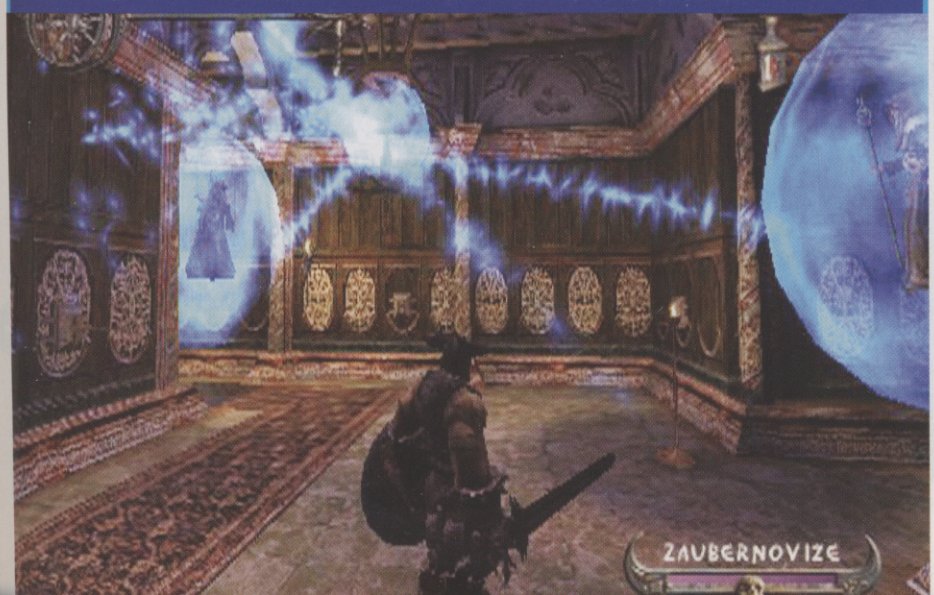
Despite not featuring a huge amount of character development or levelling up, you do at least get to upgrade your weaponry between missions. Make sure you sniff out as much gold as possible on each level, as you'll need it to equip yourself for the next. Luckily you can swap your items around between warriors and sell them back without losing cash. It's all about trial and error and you can expect to replay many of the missions before you find the right balance of hero and weaponry.

Enclave is much better than Microsoft's own fantasy adventure efforts like Azurik and Nightcaster, but that doesn't make it a stand-out action game. It is enjoyable though, and shows off the machine's graphical oomph brilliantly, making it an oasis in the current desert of decent Xbox adventures.

SOUL REAVER 2 (better than) **ENCLAVE** (worse than) **AZURIK: RISE OF PERATHIA**

Survive those flames and you get a medal

These floaty wizards will soon become the bane of your life while you're playing Enclave



CVG VERDICT

7 OUT OF TEN

A gothic adventure of eye-popping proportions that's wholly enjoyable – even in spite of its simple hack-and-slash gameplay. **Lee**

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
+ Amazing-looking	− A bit simplistic
+ Non-stop action	− Mêlée combat imprecise
+ Two games in one	− Wobbly enemy AI

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Blood Omen 2 (Xbox), Max Payne (Xbox)

DELTA FORCE: URBAN WARFARE

PSONE

The US answer to the SAS gets its first console game

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £19.99
PUBLISHER: NOVALOGIC
OUT: AUGUST 2
DEVELOPER: REBELLION
URL: WWW.NOVALOGIC.COM

A real-life US Army Black Ops and commando-style fighting unit, Delta Force is shrouded in secrecy with a well-earned hard-as-nails reputation. Delta Force has already been a huge hit on PC and now its Urban Warfare division is sneaking past the guards and onto the PSone.

MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU

The movie-style intro sequence captures the horror of a Delta Force Colombian drugs bust that goes tragically up in smoke. You can almost hear the PSone creaking under the strain. Playing as lone wolf Delta Force operative John Carter, one of the few survivors from the failed Black Op, your adventure begins in Tijuana, Mexico, on the trail of a drugs baron. Soon the plot fans out to embrace a terrifying scenario involving terrorists and nukes.

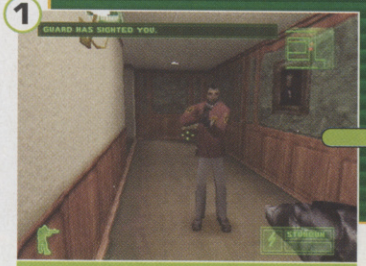
REVIEWER
MAURA SUTTON

You want the info from the Captain's desk but you've got to kill him first

DELTA CRUEL HAND

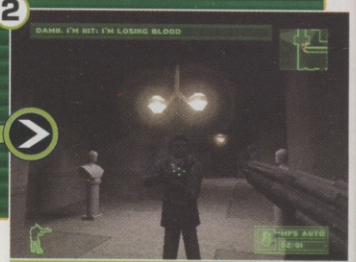
The missions are well-paced, with a good mixture of very long and short. Usually you are outnumbered ten-to-one, so there's plenty of emphasis placed on stealth in order to gain a tactical advantage, although you'll also get plenty of chances to let rip with your impressive arsenal of weaponry.

1



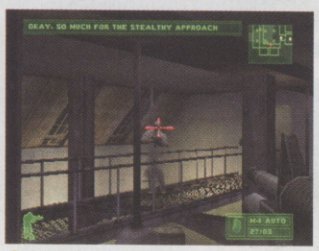
After sneaking through a Swiss bank crawling with guards without the use of lethal firepower...

2



...you're plunged into the middle of a frantic stand-off against the terrorists, with bullets flying

Some missions involve rescuing hostages such as this scientist



Headshots are a good way to conserve ammo. Fun, too, of course

Considering the graphical limitations of the PSone, Urban Warfare could never hope to aspire to the gorgeous looks of Medal Of Honor: Frontline or the tactical intricacies of PC Delta Force games. In terms of gameplay it's much closer to the Syphon Filter series.

Urban Warfare is tough, gritty and hard, just like the real-life Delta Force heroes. But while PSone owners may be happy, for a classy shooter, everyone else should opt for Frontline and Deus Ex on the PS2. CVG

Finding an enemy radio allows you to intercept their communications

A tricky one-man stand-off to prevent the terrorists from grabbing the chemicals

Some of the levels look so gloomy, night vision is required all the time

CVG VERDICT

Making allowances for the graphical limitations of the PSone, this is a challenging and intelligent shooter. **Maura**

6 OUT OF TEN

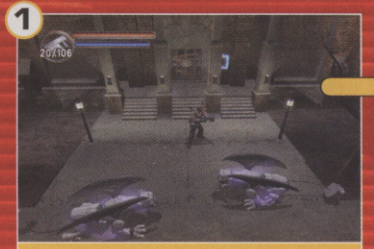
GOOD VS BAD

+	−
+ Realistic terrorist scenarios	− Gloomy graphics
+ Impressive voice acting	− No multiplayer
+ Cinematic cutscenes	− Lots of unlocking doors

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
MOH: Frontline (PS2), Syphon Filter 1-3 (PSone)

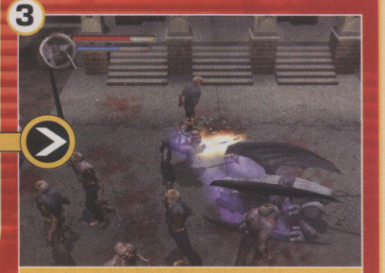
NOWHERE TO RUN

Being totally surrounded by an army of attackers is one of the best things about Hunter. Rarely is there a moment on screen when you're not being forced to frantically fight for your life. Even when things are looking peaceful, you can guarantee that all hell is just about to break loose.



All is quiet, then these two huge stone gargoyles burst into life

Suddenly all manner of freaks pop out of the woodwork



Hack like mad and use special moves to get yourself out of trouble

HUNTER: THE RECKONING

Simple **slasher mayhem** for the **bloody-minded** out there

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-4
COST: £39.99
PUBLISHER: INTERPLAY ENT.
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL MAYHEM
URL: WWW.DIGITALMAYHEM.INTERPLAY.COM

XBOX

Help a granny cross the road in the real world and you feel like some sort of social superhero. But in Hunter's universe good deeds are only recognised and measured by how many crusty zombies, nasty werewolves, giant spidery creatures and other unholy mofos you viciously slaughter in order to save humanity. No, this slash 'n' shoot gore fest is not for gamers with weak stomachs.

A frightened little girl clutches her teddy bear as you protect her from being savaged by huge, slobbering gargoyles, rancid zombies and ghosts. You gallantly slash and blast your way through hordes of attackers, using heavy-duty weapons and special moves, but just when you think you've got her to safety, her toy morphs into a giant ferocious teddy bear, intent on pulverising your brains into the concrete. Great.

There are tons of cool scenarios like this scattered throughout the game, and seven painfully tough boss characters to annihilate along the way. And although the adventure is very one-dimensional, you're guaranteed to get loads of satisfaction from the sheer amount of bloody action.

Lay into multiple creatures with a stream of manic melee attacks

FRANTIC FOURPLAY

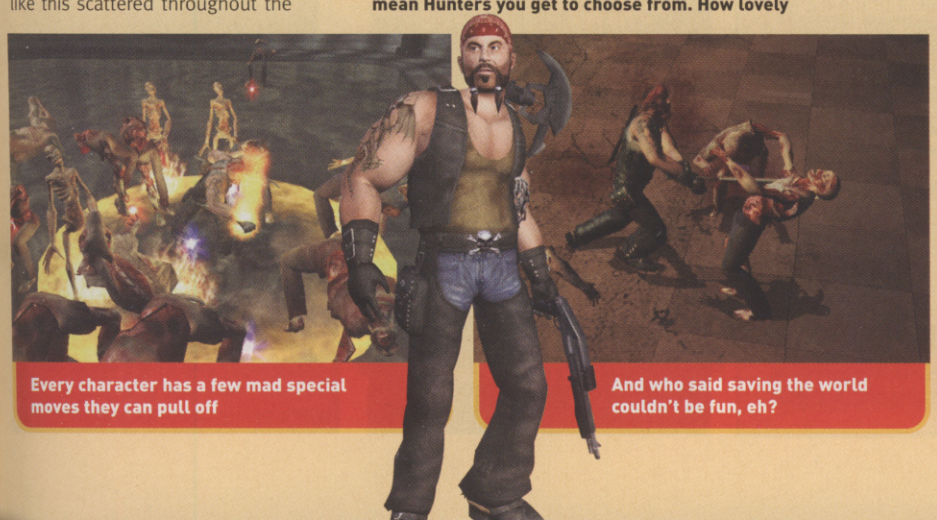
There are four cool characters to choose from, each with unique strengths, special moves and extra abilities. As you progress, your character gains experience and gets more powerful. But as you grow stronger so do your enemies, so this element feels a bit pointless.

You can venture through the entire main game solo, or cooperatively with up to three other mates. Playing with friends is a laugh, but every player is constricted to the same screen, as in Gauntlet: Dark Legacy on GC. Good communication is the only solution to avoiding high levels of frustration.

Singleplayer provides much more freedom, but the fixed camera angle in both modes often brings unpreventable blind-side attacks. Still, it's immersive, utterly mindless carnage all the way, whichever mode you choose. CVG

Save the day with a dazzling display of hacking swordsmanship

Sexy long-legged Samantha Alexander is one of the four mean Hunters you get to choose from. How lovely


Every character has a few mad special moves they can pull off

And who said saving the world couldn't be fun, eh?

CVG VERDICT

It's got all the brains of a zombie, but the gory action is always brutal, sometimes repetitive, and surprisingly entertaining. **Mike**

7 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ Deliciously gory
+ Good-looking visuals
+ Cool single and multiplayer
− Action can become a bit repetitive in places
− Annoying fixed-camera angle

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS...
Buffy The Vampire Slayer (Xbox)

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR GOLF

Might **tee** you off...

GBA

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-4
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: DIGITAL WORLDWIDE
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: REBELLION
URL: WWW.REBELLION.CO.UK/GAMES-TIGER-INDEX

The swingometer looks simple but allows for precision golfing

Like darts, we reckon golf was invented to give lardy geriatrics the chance to be good at a sport. Well you don't exactly need to be svelte, trimmed and toned to play, do you?

So imagine the fatties' collective shriek of horror when a decidedly non-fat upstart going by the name of Tiger Woods starts playing and takes the game all for himself. This big cat can arguably claim the title of best golfer in the world, and now Tiger Woods has got a bunch of videogames to prove it.

Real-time weather effects will scupper your play, no question

Landing your balls in the rough is never a good thing. But it can be difficult to avoid...

KING OF THE SWINGERS

Swing like the pro himself in an accurate golf simulation that's great fun – for a while. The game uses the now-standard swingometer, which lets you adjust power, spin and distance, all with just three button presses.

The course graphics are realistic and the golfers almost look as if they've been lifted right out of video footage. The problem is that there's just one course, so regardless of the many different play modes and challenges, you'll learn how to take each hole really quickly, making the game a doddle to blast through.

Check the terrain's camber with the overhead view. Yes, it does matter!

CVG VERDICT

6 OUT OF TEN

A good game of golf spoiled by a complete lack of courses. Lee

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Looks swanky	Only one course
Accurate ball physics	No obstacles on court
Decent multiplay	You'll get bored

BIGGER THEY COME, HARDER THEY ARE

As if fighting hundreds of weapon-wielding skeletons and creepy freaks weren't enough, you'll regularly find yourself face to face with enormous murderous boss characters.

The Golem stamps the ground and unleashes a barrage of boulders from above

CASTLEVANIA: HARMONY OF DISSONANCE

Drac's back and he's **mad**

GAME INFO BOX

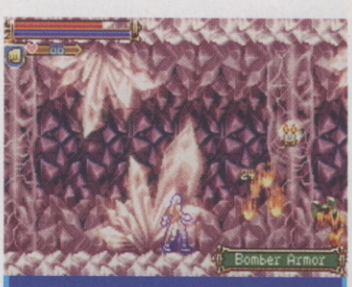
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £34.99
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
OUT: SEPTEMBER
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
URL: WWW.KONAMI.COM

The Belmonts have to be one of the unluckiest families in videogaming history. Ever since the 1987 release of Castlevania on NES they've been forced toe-to-toe with Dracula, battling through his monster-filled castle for what seems like an eternity. And they just keep bouncing back for more. But despite the bundles of Castlevania titles over the years, Harmony Of Dissonance proves the series still has lashings of addictive platform action up its sleeve.

NEW MR WHIPPY

This time round you play 18-year-old Juste Belmont, equipped with the trusty whip and the funky skills and powers that have been passed down through Juste's badass bloodline.

Similar to the first Castelvania game on GBA, the action sees you exploring huge labyrinthine areas and twatting the hell out of endless crazy creatures and gargantuan bosses to gain experience points and level up. The role-playing elements work



Release some whupass on a foe, then watch him go up in flames

GBA

Chase the witch with your flying fists of fury. Take that, harpy!

Your standard whip attack can become damn powerful

MARIO ADVANCE 2
BETTER THAN **CASTLEVANIA** WORSE THAN
RAYMAN ADVANCE

He swings one of his huge fists at you but you dart backwards and retaliate with a flame attack

After a while you manage to smash his ugly head off and reveal a weak spot. Go for it!

Juste spears a Medusa Head with a mad special ice-dash attack

fantastically well; powering up, equipping spells and setting abilities is now very comprehensive. So whether you played the last game or not, you'll be able to tuck into the action straight away.

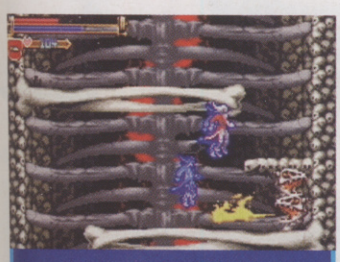
Overall, this adventure is much easier than its predecessor, which might miff hardcore fans. For the rest of you though, the difficulty level is well-balanced and the standard maiming action is just about right.

BACKTRACK BACKLASH

More enemies, new weapons and awesome original spells appear in this sequel. Plus, now you can collect gold on your travels, which can be traded in to buy handy potions and goodies. However, for all these new additions, a couple of annoying elements remain. For example, you have to backtrack far too frequently to progress and often discover new areas only through chance.

What's more, the visuals are still nothing to rave about. Okay, they're brighter and the sprites are bigger, but the backgrounds look dull. Don't be too disheartened though, because Harmony Of Dissonance's top-class gameplay ranks it as one of the best adventures on GBA. VG

Trek through a weird corridor to reach the second half of the castle



Leap into the air in a bid to dodge the Bone Tower's flames

CVG VERDICT

A hugely enjoyable role-playing platform adventure. Mike

8 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ Awesome enemies
+ Comprehensive and rewarding power-ups
− Poor backgrounds
− Far too much backtracking

DRAGONBALL Z LEGENDARY SUPER WARRIORS

Epic tales on GBC

Cards are dealt randomly and are attacking or defending

The animé-style talking heads are pure class, even on GBC

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: INFOGRAMES
URL: WWW.INFOGRAMES.CO.UK

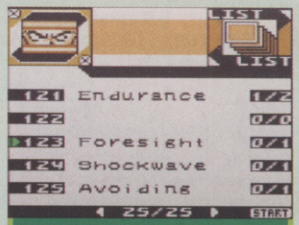
Command Attacks involve quick-fingered button-bashing action

Dragonball Z is a cool cartoon series and ripe for gaming glory. While the recent GBA release was more of an action adventure, Legendary Super Warriors is primarily a card battling game with a smattering of exploration and lots of beautifully illustrated text.

WAY OF THE BALLS

The story follows the plot of the Saiyan sagas, with Gohan and Goku teaming up to save Earth. You get to use your magical card collection in a series of turn-based battles. The most testing parts are working out which card to use where and trying to think ahead of your opponent. Possibly one for younger gamers and DBZ fanatics, though. VG

Beam attacks are devastating so use them frequently



Use the List option to check on your collection as it grows

The occasional top-down view

CVG VERDICT

Looks great for GBC but samey and card battles drag. Maura

6 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ All your cartoon faves
+ Classy animé
+ Spiky hair
− It's better on GBA
− Cheesy music
− Battles too long

MANIAC RACERS ADVANCE

Motorcycle mayhem with those cartoon nutters

Why do people ride dirt bikes? You drive around a muddy track, jumping 20 feet into the air, and end up wondering why you've broken half the bones in your body.

The riders in Maniac Racers take this a step further, doing loop-the-loops, hurling missiles and generally acting crazy. You race through themed tracks from a stadium to a child's bedroom and a concert stage. Unfortunately, though the tracks are superficially different, most of the obstacles, ramps and loops are too similar to provide any real variety.

GAME INFO BOX
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-4
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
URL: WWW.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM

Thankfully, the gameplay lives up to its 'manic' name. The races are fast as opponents try to get the better of you over the short laps. But the side-on view will be unfamiliar to many players, and takes away from the tension. The lack of other racers on screen at the same time makes it feels like you're doing a time trial. But if you want a racing game that's a bit different, you could do worse.

The DJ-themed level is very cool

Hit the penguin and you'll crash

Maniac racing action abounds

Sonic, anyone?

CVG VERDICT
Flawed but fun. Suffers from an unfamiliar viewpoint. Jimmy

6 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD
+ Fast-paced action
+ Fun, cartoony graphics
− Side-on view
− Repetitive tracks
− Derivative

KONAMI COLLECTOR'S SERIES: ARCADE CLASSICS

The oldies aren't always golden

GAME INFO BOX
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-2
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: KONAMI
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: KONAMI
URL: WWW.KONAMI-EUROPE.COM

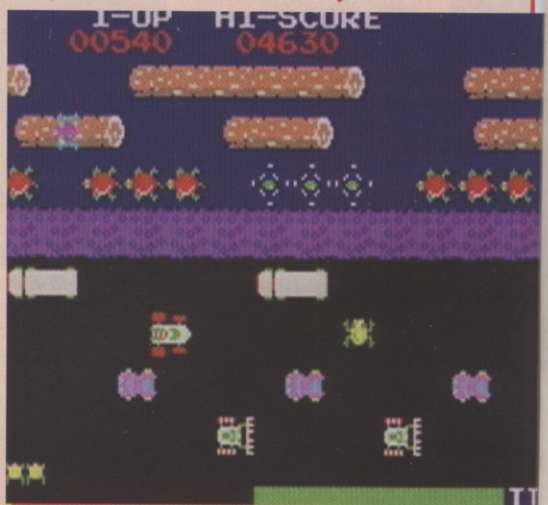
What does your mind conjure up when you hear the word 'classic'? Mario Kart? Pro Evolution Soccer? Halo, maybe? Probably not Gyruss or Time Pilot.

Arcade Classics is like a museum of extreme retro gaming. Best to keep it in a glass case, then, behind a wall of security guards, because once you stick this cart into your GBA, you'll be dumbfounded by the difficult controls and unrewarding gameplay of the titles on offer. It feels like you're playing them on your mobile phone.

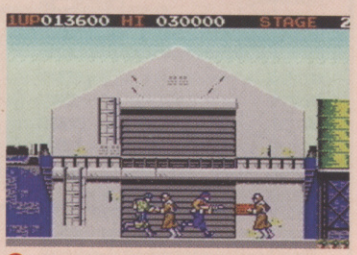
The only game of the six that works as a 'classic' is Frogger, because games like that aren't really made any more. The problem with Green Beret (platform), Yie Ar Kung Fu (beat 'em up) and the three shooters is that you've see them done loads better since these 'Arcade Classics' were big hits.

With so many high-quality GBA games available, it makes more sense to buy one great game than six mediocre ones.

"Leave me alone!"



Can you guess which one is the frog?



Enemies just run straight at you

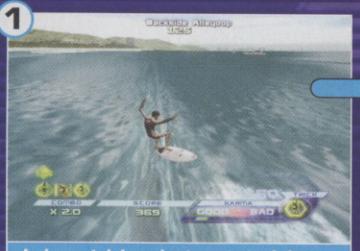
CVG VERDICT
Too dull to justify spending £30. GBA has better on offer. Jimmy

3 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD
+ It's got Frogger
+ Some cool music
+ Nostalgia
− Simplistic
− Difficult controls
− On-rails gameplay

EXTREME ECO WARRIOR

The challenge-based globetrotting Career mode is where the best action is. Free dolphins from fishing nets, scare birds, dodge objects, try to rack up big scores and nail combos. But to progress through the mode, you'll first have to become confident in negotiating the waves.



In jump tricks, aim to cut straight down into the wave nose-first

A 'floater' is the surfing equivalent of a skateboarding grind and good for linking moves together

Hit the Circle button at the crest of the wave to pull off a 'snapturn'. Great for cutting back on yourself

TRANSWORLD SURF

Press Square to slow down and let the barrel catch up with you

Creating more **of a ripple** than a **tidal wave**

GAME INFO BOX

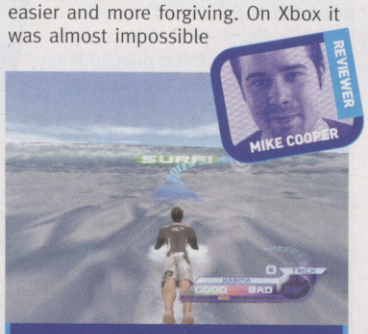
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: **1-4**
COST: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **INFOGRAMES**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **ANGEL STUDIOS**
URL: **WWW.INFOGRAMES.CO.UK**

Unless you're a Cornish beach bum, the sport of surfing is about as popular and widespread in the UK as dwarf tossing or cheese rolling. See, for us level-headed landlubbers, the prospect of zipping ourselves up in tight rubber, getting eaten by sharks or drowned in a rip tide isn't that appealing. Thanks to the wonder of modern home entertainment and Transworld Surf though, you can now experience the thrill of the sea without fear of death.

The problem is, most surfing games suck ass, and Transworld Surf on Xbox was no different. However, the game's been tweaked to make the PS2 version more playable. So is it? Well, basically yes, but as an extreme sports experience the whole thing's still pretty average – even with all the tinkering that's gone on.

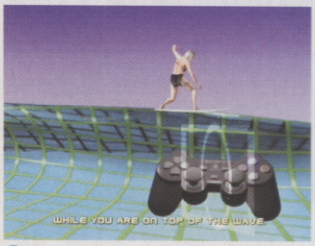
WAVING NOT DROWNING

Controlling your chosen surfer and pulling off stunts have been made easier and more forgiving. On Xbox it was almost impossible to judge whether you were going to land a trick or wipeout, but now you can be confident that dodgy wave physics won't spoil a faultless landing. But despite this improvement, it's still handicapped by the fact that you don't have the awesome array of fluid moves or flexibility of other extreme titles like Tony Hawk's 3. Fair enough, it's a different sport, but this is where the biggest problem lies.



Paddle towards the wave's sweet spot, then jump to your feet

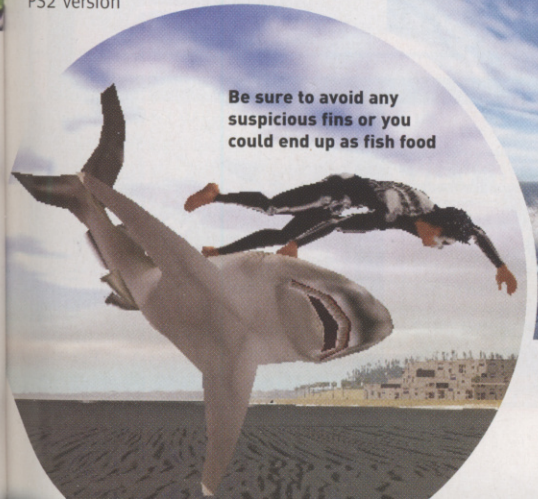
Why not catch a quick ride on a jet ski from a sexy Reef Girl?



The Tutorial mode teaches you surfing terms and basic skills

Extreme sports like skateboarding and snowboarding boast free-roaming environments that encourage and reward exploration. In contrast, Transworld Surf is all about riding in a virtually straight line along a single wave, which can feel painfully restrictive and unexciting, even with sharks and boats to avoid. Surf fans will no doubt argue that this is the nature of the beast, but us laymen retort that it's just not that much fun.

Different shoulder button combinations enable you to pull off big air moves



Be sure to avoid any suspicious fins or you could end up as fish food

CVG VERDICT

Certainly better than the Xbox version, but still doesn't manage to drag surfing into PS2's extreme sports big league. **Mike**

5 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

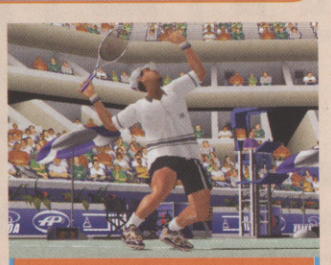
+ Solid wave physics
+ Plenty of bizarre challenges in the Career mode
– Tricks don't feel fluid
– Action feels very on-rails
– Extremely niche

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THIS...
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 (PS2/Xbox/GC/PC)

AGASSI TENNIS GENERATION

Play **tennis...** that's it

The 3D courts and banks of high seating look mint



It's just as easy to play if you use the keyboard as a pad

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: **1-4**
COST: **£24.99**
PUBLISHER: **CRYO**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **AQUA PACIFIC**
URL: **www.mindscape.com**

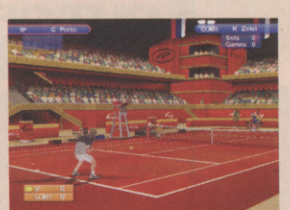
Try not to bump into your team-mate during Doubles matches – it won't help

More than just a tennis game, Agassi Tennis Generation is also a Billy No-Mates simulation. Agassi appears alone – there's no Henman, no Lleyton Hewitt and no women at all. If you want to see the Williams sisters' jubblies bouncing about, you'll just have to go elsewhere. Huh.

This is standard videogame tennis fare, with few frills other than the baldy munchkin himself. There are no exciting mini-game challenges and just a couple of play modes. The Agassi Championship mode offers you $10,000 to spend on developing a career, while the arcade mode offers quick matches.

No surprises then, but the tennis is playable and the character models look nice. But with ageing masterpiece Virtua Tennis available on PC for a budget price, there's little to recommend this. **CVG**

There are four types of shot but you'll mostly just lob



Naturally, court surface affects the ball's bounce

CVG VERDICT

Good tennis, but lacks fun modes and famous faces. **Lee**

6 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Nice visuals	Only features Agassi
The Championship mode is original	No mini-games
	No-frills approach

Levels are set in different areas of the globe with a variety of animals to match each one

Rescue the critters and their faces pop up to say thank you

ZOOCUBE

Make like a latter-day **Noah**

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: **1-4**
COST: **£39.99**
PUBLISHER: **ACCLAIM**
OUT: **NOW**
DEVELOPER: **COYOTE DEVELOPMENTS**
URL: **WWW.ACCLAIMWORLD.COM**

GAME CUBE

Pull combos to rescue two or more animals at once

The best puzzle games are often the ones that are the simplest to play but the most complicated to explain. ZooCube's no exception. We'll have a go, but you won't really get it until you try it for yourself.

Animals have been trapped inside weird-shaped objects. These blocks fall from three directions on the screen towards the cube in the middle. If two of the same type of animal blocks touch, the block disappears and the animal inside is rescued. You can rotate the cube in three directions to match the animals to each face of the cube.

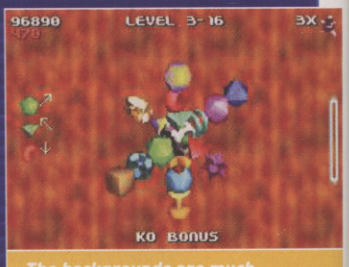
With us so far? As the shapes pile up, you can juggle them to switch their order on the cube. Power-ups

It makes perfect sense when you play it. No, really it does

ALSO ON GBA!

You can also rescue those endangered species on the move with the GBA version of ZooCube. It's essentially the same, but instead of matching weird animal shapes, the blocks falling are simpler geometric forms. It's just as playable but, without the crazy animal animations and donkey noises, it's missing much of the charm of the GC version. We'd give it a six out of ten.

No animals – maybe it should be called CubeCube instead...



The backgrounds are much plainer in the GBA version

MULTIPLAY MAMMALS

Some puzzle games are best played in single-player, while others are better in multi. ZooCube manages to be enjoyable in both and offers a bunch of different modes for up to four players.

The screens are teeny, so use the colours to help guide those mammals to safety

It's the real world shrunk down to fit into a GameCube, honest

You play as Aon (Noah, geddit?) and this is your space-age ark

Balance the cube with one animal on each side for massive points

and point bonuses appear in the sky around the cube – collect those by letting the animal blocks fall over them. The idea is to match the shapes and score as many points as possible, while regularly clearing the cube of animals to move to the next level.

There are different modes of play, and multiplayer games too. It's a great puzzler; one go can turn into a major session. Hardly what you bought your GC for, but still good fun.

CVG VERDICT

The best puzzle game on 'Cube: simple, enjoyable fun. That's it. Lee

7 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Original idea	Gets as repetitive as any other puzzler
Cute, clean graphics	A bit bland
Well-balanced play	

GORE: ULTIMATE SOLDIER

Lush **Doomsday** shooter

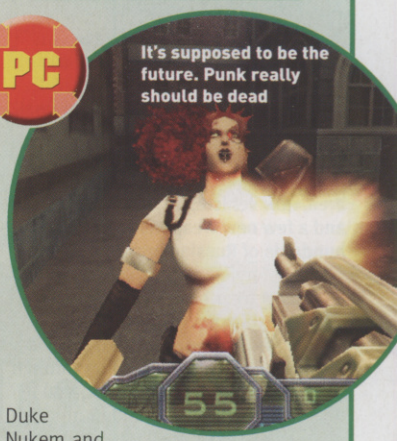
GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-16
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: CRYO
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: 4D RULES
URL: WWW.DREAMCATCHER GAMES.COM

Shoot off the enemy armour before shredding their flesh

Give a game a name like Gore and you're asking for trouble. Nothing less than a full-on carnage carnival, preferably with a free bag of offal on the side, will satisfy the claret-soaked promise of the title. Happily, Gore delivers the um, gore, as well as chucking in a healthy dollop of fast-paced shoot 'em up action for good measure.

PC



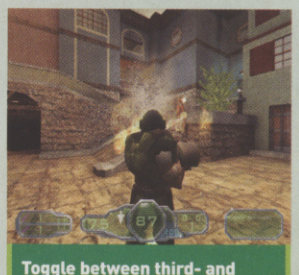
It's supposed to be the future. Punk really should be dead

PERFORATED BRAIN TO START, SIR?

Although the emphasis is clearly on the solid multiplayer game, the singleplayer is also tons of fun to play, powered by an astoundingly fast engine. Aping the old-skool lock 'n' load antics of Duke Nukem and Serious Sam, you hurtle through each well-designed and atmospheric level, hosing down the street scum with ever more obscenely bombastic weaponry.

It's a simplistic formula, but sometimes there's nothing wrong with disengaging your brain and blasting forth like a slack-jawed killing machine.

We promised you gore, and here it is. Bye-bye, biker-dude



Toggle between third- and first-person views – neat touch

CVG VERDICT

Futuristic, post-apocalyptic and just a little bit mental. Maura

7 OUT OF TEN

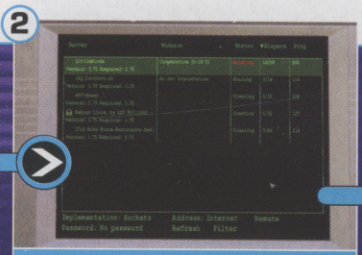
GOOD VS BAD

+	−
Wicked taunts	Dated gameplay
Huge maps	Too short
Big freakin' guns	Not rocket science

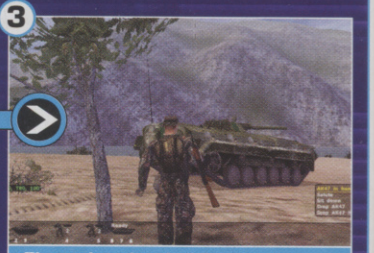
IN WITH THE OLD

It isn't just the new that's new. Even the old original campaign has been given a new lease of life, with all the old landscapes brought bang up to date. Despite what it says on the packaging however, to appreciate the much-improved graphics, you really need an improved PC.

1 Ordering your troops around is still laborious. Realistic but no fun...



2 Setting up a multiplayer game is now a whole lot more simple



3 The variety, level of detail and depth of view are much improved

OPERATION FLASHPOINT: RESISTANCE

Soviet Russia is on the **march** and you're caught in the **middle**

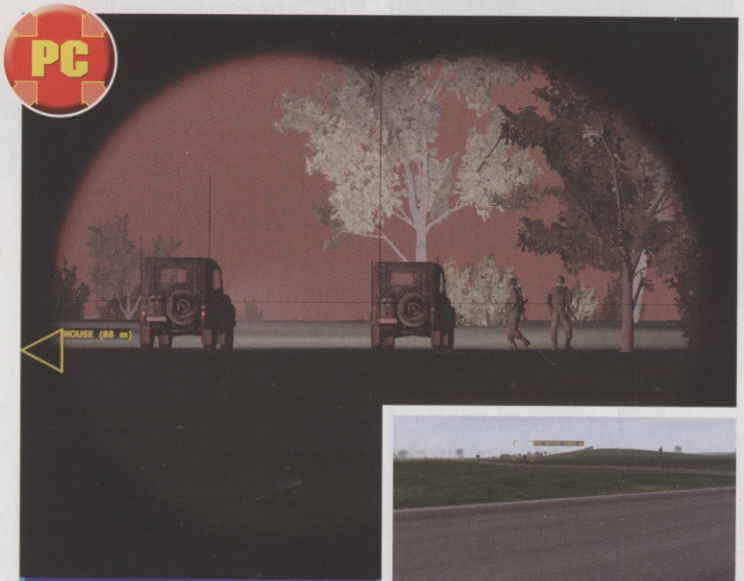
GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £19.99
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: BOHEMIA INTERACTIVE
URL: WWW.FLASHPOINT1985.COM

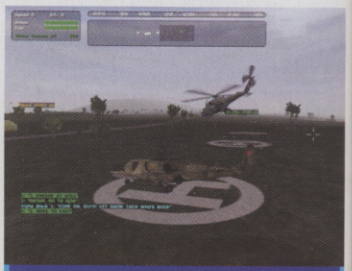
PC

It's been a year since the original release of the PC's biggest and best tactical war sim. Now, Resistance introduces a new playing area, new vehicles to ride across it and a few new weapons to fire at hundreds of Russian invaders.

The storyline is much more important than before, with you playing ex-Soviet killing machine Victor Troska, who wakes up one day to find Russian soldiers going through his sock drawer. To fight back, you must lead his fellow islanders through 20 new missions, stealing weapons and ammo as you go and trying to keep your resistance members alive.



Surprise is often your most effective weapon. Go carefully now



New vehicles include this chopper

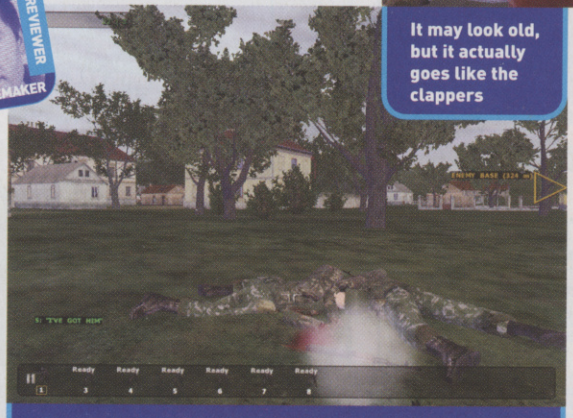
It may look old, but it actually goes like the clappers

ON YER BIKE

To be honest, apart from a very cool motorbike, the new vehicles and weapons are hardly noticeable, partly because there were more than enough already. The new island, Nogovo, however, is wonderful to explore. Over 100km² in size, the terrain is incredibly varied, with high cliffs overlooking bridges, rolling hills, and forests with trees that now look real rather than like paper cut-outs.

All in all, despite a few problems that persist from the original, Resistance is a great addition to a classic game, but will appeal much more to fans than it will newcomers.

Resistance is set before Operation Flashpoint, in 1978



Dead bodies provide a host of extra weapons and valuable ammo – there's no help from NATO this time

CVG VERDICT

Not only a great add-on, but an essential upgrade. However, as before, it's a game that may prove too hardcore for some. **Richie**

8 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ Cool new island, vehicles and weapons
+ Updated graphics
− The clumsy tactical controls remain
− A few minor bugs

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Twisty tracks! Tricks for speed! It's **not original**, but it's **fun**

FREEKSTYLE

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: **1-2**

COST: **£39.99**

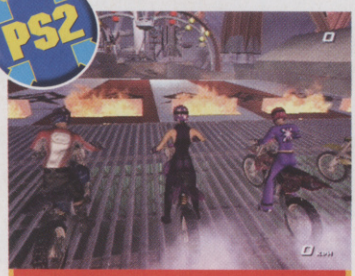
PUBLISHER: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**

OUT: **AUGUST 2**

DEVELOPER: **EA SPORTS BIG!**

URL: **WWW.EA.COM/EASPORTSBIG/GAMES/FREEKSTYLE/HOME.JSP**

PS2



The scream of the engines on the starting grid is deafening

Sometimes we have bad thoughts. The little devil shouts them into our brains as we sit giving every new game laid before us the fairest possible hearing. "Three thousand people work at EA, Dean. This is their brilliant new idea: dry out the courses from SSX with a giant hairdryer and race motorbikes on them. You're not going to allow that, are you?"

RELAX, DEVIL

Freekstyle is the latest from EA Sports BIG!, where extreme sports are made to snort pure liquid gnarly. Under EA's guidance, motocross becomes a high-speed stunt spectacular on rollercoaster courses with massive jumps and swirling corkscrew corners.

Real-life motorcrossers like Mike Metzger are digitised into hyperactive muppets. On the track, motors whine on the starting grid before the bikes go blasting away. First jump, and you're hanging off the back off the bike like Superman and trying to get back on before gravity takes over. Landing tricks earns you boost.

'Wonder where they got that idea. Don't tell me: you have to race every track three times as well?' Okay, the three times thing is lame. But why

Heart attack? Broken spine will be a bit more like it when he hits the ground

There are shortcuts, but finding them's tougher than in SSX Tricky

That's not Superman. Superman wears his pants on the *outside*

Fly through the flaming hoop to multiply your points score for that trick

The power of petrol! Just point yourself at a jump and accelerate

RICHARD WHITELEY MODE

Extreme sports games always rip off each other's best Versus mode ideas. Freekstyle's Countdown mode is the next to be ripped off, we reckon. Both players start on two million points and stunt to regain points as they drain away. Being first makes points drain slower, so you have to race and trick.

1

The start. The points are already starting to tick away

2

One man falls, another lands it. Player one is in trouble

3

Player two has almost cracked it. Not long to go now...

The World of Pane stunt arena is full of fire and glass. Quite safe then...

BURN CYCLE

Tricks mean boost. It's an irrefutable fact of life. But here a succession of landed tricks stacks up your Freekout meter, and kicks off hyper-speedy on-fire-type action. Just don't fall off, because that resets it.

By all means do tricks. But try to stay on in the process

Pull a trick with a full meter, and your wheel catches fire

EXCITEBIKE 64
BETTER THAN **FREEKSTYLE** WORSE THAN
SHAUN PALMER

would you pull dangerous stunts if there was no reward? And boost's only half the story. Tricks also build a Freekout meter, and when you max that out, things really heat up.

SPEED FREAK

The back wheel catches fire and a timer appears. Only a few seconds. A few seconds of hyper-speed. Screen blurred to hell. If you pull a trick while on a Freekout, you extend the timer. Go faster longer. It's crucial to initialise the Freekout on a stretch of course you can trick on. Gives you the best chance of getting a decent lead.

A lot of games cheat to make races close and exciting. Race a flawless race and you'll still have the five riders swarming all over you into the final bend. Great if you're losing because you're never out of it, but enough to make you kick the telly over if your only mistake is on the last lap and you come sixth. Finally you admit it to yourself. You hate it.

You can live with it though, because Freekstyle is a well-made game. The speed is always immense, the courses are well designed and the progression is solid. Win an event, and you unlock a new bike, outfit and stat points for your rider. There's a limit to how different one stunt with a guy hanging off a bike in midair can look from another, but the Freestyle trick events work better than in that snowboard game.

The reason? Petrol power. Waiting for gravity to push you over a jump is a pain. In Freekstyle, you point yourself at a jump and accelerate – adding boost to get even more air. Makes jumping through flaming hoops a blast.

Its resemblance to SSX is a flaw, but you may like this better than the snowboarding variant. It's harder for sure, especially when you're having to control your speed over bumps in the later stages so you don't flounder on an uphill. However, if you've SSXed enough for now, give this a wide berth.

Metzger. After failing his audition for The Muppets, he turned to games

The Freestyle mode isn't as much fun as the one in Tony Hawk's 3, but it's alright

Racing through a forest fire on Burn It Up. Flaming trees fall in front of you

He thinks he's gnarly, but he's wearing a green jumpsuit

Nice helmet! We can say that because it's a girl rider, y'see

If you get it wrong it destroys your nac-knackers

CVG VERDICT

Fast, challenging and great fun. The best bike game on PS2, no doubt. Bear in mind, though, that it's just like SSX without the snow. **Dean**

8 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ Lightning quick	– Unoriginal concept
+ Classic SSX gameplay	– Limited stunts
+ Good multiplayer	– Bad music

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...
SSX Tricky (PS2), Excitebike 64 (N64)

KING OF FIGHTERS EX: NEO BLOOD

Classy palm punisher

GBA

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-2

COST: £29.99

PUBLISHER: SAMMY CORP.

OUT: AUGUST 2

DEVELOPER: MARVELOUS ENT.

URL: WWW.SAMMY-ZONE.COM/KOF

Playing fighting games on GBA and nailing complex combos on its diddy Dpad often feels as fiddly as threading a needle while wearing boxing gloves. King Of Fighters on the handheld is no different.

However, if your fingers are no thicker than chopsticks, Neo Blood's hardcore old-skool-style 2D beat 'em up is just as enjoyable as Super Street Fighter II Turbo Revival.

Ryo's fireball is ten times bigger than Ryu's. Huh!

Build up your power gauge by landing tons of strikes

Geese looks unimpressed by Terry's campfire-building skills

Ouch! Iori fails to dodge a crunching knuckle sandwich

Although the fighting arenas don't look quite as vibrant or slick as those in Capcom's palm-sized brawler, Neo Blood's combatants look fantastic and each of the contenders is blessed with a killer array of unique attacks.

The main Team Battle mode sees you mix and match four fighters from a cast of 18, and take your kick-ass crew through a series of fast-paced hardcore matches. But if you choose to fight as one of the six official teams – Fatal Fury, Hero, Ikari, Psycho Soldier, Korea or Art Of Fighting – you access one of the six extra fighters on offer.

The action then becomes story-led, and when you complete the game you can unlock extra characters like Geese. This play mode works well and compels you to work through the game again and again as each of the teams. And with solid Single Play, Survival and two-player link-up modes, King Of Fighters on GBA fits nicely into any fight fan's collection. CVG

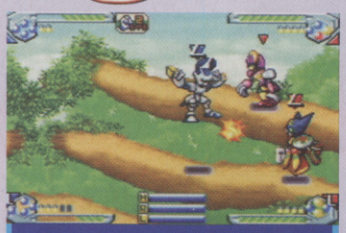
CVG VERDICT

Speedy action and compelling game modes keep you fighting. Mike

7 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

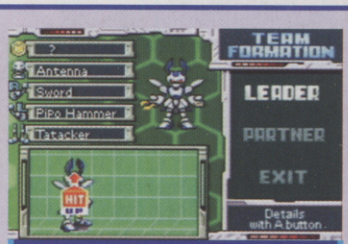
+ Loads of fighters and special moves
+ Good replay factor
– Extremely flat backdrops
– Choppy animations



There are two robots on each side, but you control just the leader

Mermaid tails help keep your underwater speed constant

Work up through local bouts, then enter championship fights



Here you equip and fiddle with your mech's equipment

MEDABOTS AX METABEE/ROKUSHO

Frantic double trouble

Robots are awesome. We can pitch them into vicious cock-fight style battles with other robots, completely free of guilt. You see, robots have no feelings.

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1-2

COST: £24.99

PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT

OUT: NOW

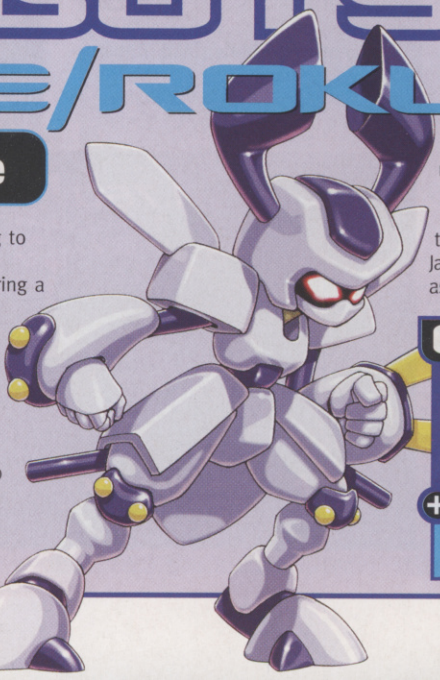
DEVELOPER: NATSUME

URL: WWW.UBISOFT.CO.UK

Medabots takes robot battling to the next level. Choose from two versions of the game, each featuring a different collection of mechs to robattle with and therefore a different selection of robot body parts to collect too.

Before each fight you have to tactically equip your robots with different body parts. If you're underwater, say, you should equip the fishy tail. If your enemies are particularly strong, you'll need to equip parts that aid regeneration. There are literally hundreds of different body parts and you win more after each successful robattle.

The titles are highly addictive, among the best-looking on GBA and the soundtrack – complete with crazy Japlish speech samples – is astounding too. CVG



CVG VERDICT

Mad but great fun. Will test your games ability *and* your sanity. Lee

7 OUT OF TEN

GOOD VS BAD

+ Fast-paced fights
+ Trade parts between friends
– No tutorial mode
– Tricky controls
– Gets really tough

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- Xbox game of the year
- GameCube game of the year
- PC game of the year
- Handheld game of the year
- Online game of the year
- British developer of the year
- Publisher of the year
- Hardware of the year
- Game innovation of the year *(PC)*
- Game innovation of the year *(console)*
- Most wanted game of Christmas 2002
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DINO STALKER

These monsters have teeth! But they don't bite much! Oh

GAME INFO BOX

NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
OUT: SEPT
DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
URL: WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM

Dino Stalker is best described as Jurassic Park crossed with Time Crisis, with a dash of Quake. As US WWII pilot Mike Wired, you have just narrowly escaped death at the hands of a German ace, only to face T-Rexes with teeth the size of spears.

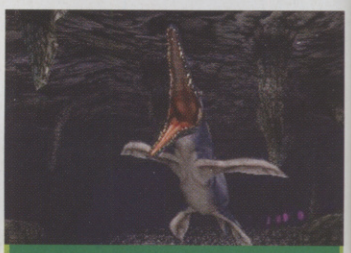
The best way to down these lethal lizards is using the G-Con2, shooting at the screen to fire off Mike's sniper pistol and using the Dpad on the G-Con's grip to move freely through the lush environments. It's tricky at first, especially when you're trying to sidestep a Raptor at the same time as taking aim at his bonce, but it gets easier with practice – too easy in fact?

SURVIVOR SKILLS

Since this is the third in the Gun Survivor series, you should be familiar with the controls. The GunCon-2 handles Mike's movement through the world with its built-in Dpad, while strafing left or right is handled by the A and B buttons. It's also possible to zoom in, sniper-style, by pressing the A and B buttons together.

In some ways it successfully mimics a first-person shooter, but with the advantage of holding a gun instead of a mouse. Thing is, you can't choose to look up or down as this is handled automatically in reaction to situations. In fact, the control system is as cumbersome as it is uncomfortable. You might have a vision of rushing through jungles, popping caps into dino ass. The reality is a slow-moving, occasionally disorientating trial

Big and scary he may be, but grenades soon bring him down



You play the game mostly from the radar, then curse the controls

"Look at my well-manicured claws..."

At the start Mike Wired parachutes into the forgotten world

Oviraptors jump out of the sand at you. You need radar

Quick, shoot the bugger!

KILLING GAME

There are eight stages and encounters with bosses happen regularly throughout. Quite inventive they are too, with their cunning tactics, and that's in addition to hiding their weak spots.

The Carnotaurus is one of the first bosses you'll meet

Imagine if Jeff Goldblum had had a rocket launcher in Jurassic Park...

Trinity is a psychic dino who summons his Raptor buddies

The Triceratops' hide is tough, so explode the barrels to defeat him

At times like this you'll curse the control system because it's so awkward. But you have a BIG gun

that you only suffer because it looks so cool.

DOOMED TO EXTINCTION

You'd expect the odds to be against you in a prehistoric tropical face-off with fear incarnate. So you feel let down as soon as you see that all the shotguns, rocket launchers, missile launchers, miniguns, plasma cannons, grenade launchers and tazers are in plentiful supply. It's like shooting at tortoises (albeit really fast ones) with a Magnum. Another apparent bonus is that health supplies are never far away. So even if you are blown away by some of the clever set pieces Capcom has worked into the game, your mind starts wandering because there isn't much of a threat.

CVG VERDICT

6 OUT OF TEN

A spectacular cinch of a game whose eight levels of potential terror are too easily massacred. Better suited to the arcade. **Paul**

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
+ Really amazing to look at	− Not as good as Lost World
+ Clever control system	− Bit awkward
+ Wicked dino theme	− Extremely easy to beat

IF YOU LIKE THIS TRY THESE...

Time Crisis 2 (PS2), House Of The Dead 2 (DC)

The female character. Isn't she lovely? Not very, actually

Walk over items to collect them – yes, it really is that simple

SPIRIT: SEARCH FOR THE HOMELAND

Herdy Gerdy it ain't

GAME INFO BOX

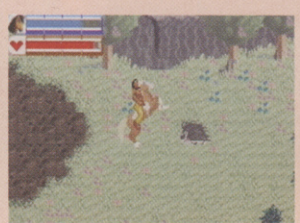
NUMBER OF PLAYERS: 1
COST: £29.99
PUBLISHER: THQ
OUT: NOW
DEVELOPER: THQ
URL: www.thq.co.uk

We've all watched the films: they've made us laugh, they've made us cry, but games based on Disney franchises don't tend to fare so well.

Spirit continues this trend. It's basically a herding game, with you as a Native American who rounds up wandering horses by offering them food, water and samples of your wonderful warbling talents.

The puzzles are simple – so much so that it becomes an almost endless procession of pressing select, finding out what the horse needs, searching for the item, and bringing it back to the horse.

Naughty horsey. That's the biggest horse dump ever



Avoid aggressive animals...

But Mother Nature is always ready to remind us—

The movie stills are the best part of the game

La la la... He talks to the animals... La la la...

Various forest animals give you quests, but these involve less brain-power than an afternoon shovelling manure. Even the novelty of riding your newly tamed horse wears off after about 30 seconds, if that. It just feels like a blatant cash-in.

CVG VERDICT

3 OUT OF TEN

Strictly for for those just out of nappies only. **Jimmy**

GOOD VS BAD

+	−
+ Nice stills from the movie	− Monotonous
+ You get to ride a horse!	− Poor music and graphics

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7th

V-RALLY 3

COURTESY OF **INFOGRAMES**

V-Rally 3 on GBA is an amazing little racer that'll get you muddier than a hippy at Glastonbury. So buckle up and get your flame-retardant kit on, because this red-hot palm-pleaser is ready to explode.

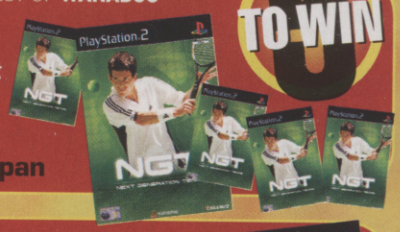
Q. CVG likes V-Rally 3 a helluva lot. What did we score it in the July issue?
A. Five stars B. 16 golden bananas C. Nine out of ten D. B+

5 TO WIN

6th

NEXT GENERATION TENNIS

COURTESY OF **WANADOO**



5 TO WIN

Wimbledon has come and gone, and all we're left with is the sweet memory of Anna Kournikova leaping around in a skimpy skirt. Oh well, at least there's still Next Generation Tennis to enjoy.

Q. What do tennis players use to hit the ball over the net?
A. A tennis racquet B. A dustbin lid C. A turtle shell D. A frying pan

5th

SUPER SMASH BROS MELEE

COURTESY OF **NINTENDO**

5 TO WIN

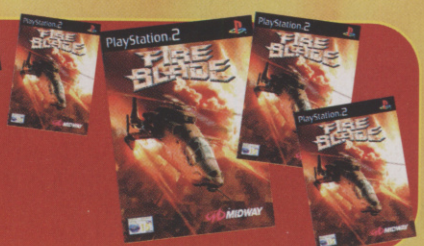
Where else can you uppercut Kirby 100 feet in the air as Mario, and lose yourself in a world of manic fighting pleasure packed to the rafters with heaps of famous Nintendo characters? Nowhere.

Q. Which of these characters *can't* you fight as in the game?
A. Link B. Bowser C. Pikachu D. Piranha plant

4th

FIRE BLADE

COURTESY OF **MIDWAY**



4 TO WIN

Light up a fire under the ass of your PS2 with a copy of Fire Blade, and get stuck into some of the nuttiest aerial combat around. Don't be shy, send us a text message or write in to win.

Q. A tricky question about fire: which of these is not flammable?
A. Wood B. Paper C. Water D. Cardboard

3rd

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER

COURTESY OF **EA**

5 TO WIN

There aren't many curvy blonde bombshells that get a kick out of mercilessly slaying endless hordes of vampires. In fact, there's only one. And here's your chance to sink your teeth into Buffy on Xbox.

Q. Which upcoming comedy canine adventure is Sarah Michelle Gellar starring in?
A. Beethoven's 5th B. Lassie Does Dallas C. Bingo: Part Deux D. Scooby Doo

Trailblazer!

ttest prizes here every month

2nd

PS2 AND FIRE BLADE

COURTESY OF **MIDWAY**

TO WIN

Time to cover your face in camo paint, arm yourself with a PS2 and a copy of Fire Blade, and let out an almighty war cry. Full-on explosive aerial combat is only a whisker away, so get your butt in gear, soldier, and win yourself this killer package on the double.

Q. What do you pilot in Fire Blade?
A. A glider B. A helicopter C. A 747 D. A hot air balloon

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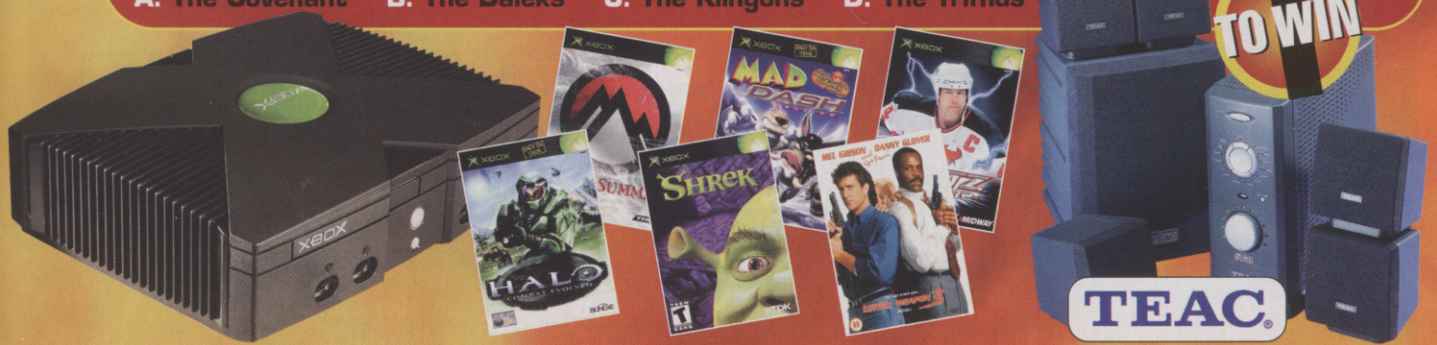
Q. What is the name of race of aliens you first encounter in Halo?
A. The Covenant B. The Daleks C. The Klingons D. The Triffids



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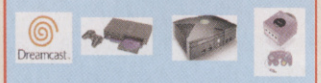

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CVG gets under the bonnets of this year's hottest driving games

BURNOUT 2: POINT OF IMPACT

FORMAT: PS2, GC, XBOX
OUT: OCTOBER
DEVELOPER: CRITERION
PUBLISHER: ACCLAIM

This winter, gamers everywhere will be keeping buckets of water next to their TVs. The reason? Burnout 2 will be setting televisions alight across the country. The sequel to last year's smashy-crashy high-speed racer is slicker, swifter and more explosive than ever. We're white-hot with anticipation.

Burnout 2 looks as if it's going to give everything you want from a racing sequel. The visuals are vastly improved with brand new lighting effects that bring the courses to life. The courses themselves are now around three times as big as the original's and set around one stylised American peninsula. You'll race in Rocky Mountains-style settings, as well as on tracks inspired by New Mexico, Miami and a busy international airport like LAX.

The sun reflects off office blocks as well as the cars

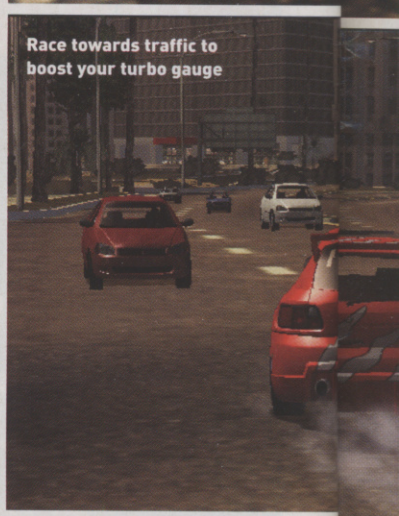
GO-FASTER STRIPES

There are new cars too. Some vehicles are customisable and some are secret, like 1950s hotrods and police cars. Damage effects have been ramped up to the maximum. Brand new concertina effects will squish your vehicles in new and inventive ways and the real-time particle damage engine (though it sounds super-spoddy) makes for some of the most spectacularly realistic smashes ever seen in a game.

There are brand new modes in there too, including a Pursuit game where, like in Need For Speed, you get to play at cops and robbers.

Improvements all round then, but where Burnout 2 is sure to shine most is in the sense of outrageous recklessness you get from playing. That unforgettable feeling of racing at turbo-assisted speed through oncoming traffic is what good videogames are all about.

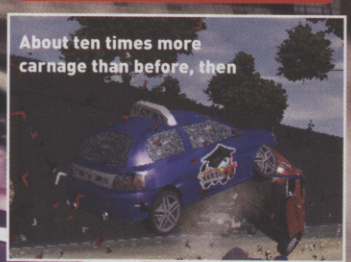
You've never seen light reflections like the ones in Burnout 2 before



Race towards traffic to boost your turbo gauge

CVG RECKONS

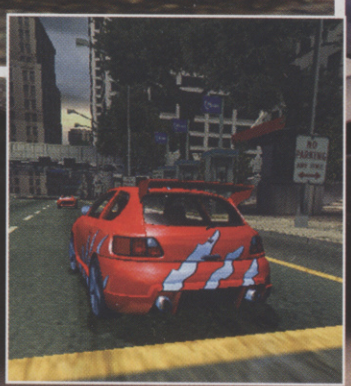
Bigger, faster, and with even more earth-shattering smashes than before, this is revving up to be one of this year's best 'fun' racers. Lee



About ten times more carnage than before, then

It's shiny and beautiful, but you'll be wrecking it soon enough

Particle effects and 3D smoke make for a stunning-looking racer



Customise your cars for fun – and to impress the honeys, of course

SEPOWER

It'll take something more than a bit of T-cut to sort *that* out

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

FORMAT: PS2, XBOX, GC, PC
OUT: SEPTEMBER 6
DEVELOPER: EA
PUBLISHER: EA

You, a mate and two AIs steam through oncoming traffic at 200mph, behind the wheels of top-of-the-range licensed sports cars in a suicidal race through spaghetti streets littered with dangerous but rewarding short cuts.

This latest Need For Speed game provides some of the best multiplayer race action CVG has experienced in recent months

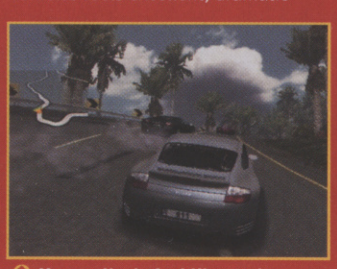
To throw extra elements of danger and adrenalin into the mix, the police are in hot pursuit. Their buddies are busy forming roadblocks with Stinger Strips that puncture all your tyres, and helicopters drop barrel bombs on you from above. It's a surprise they don't just nuke the entire area and be done with it.

INTO THE FAST LANE

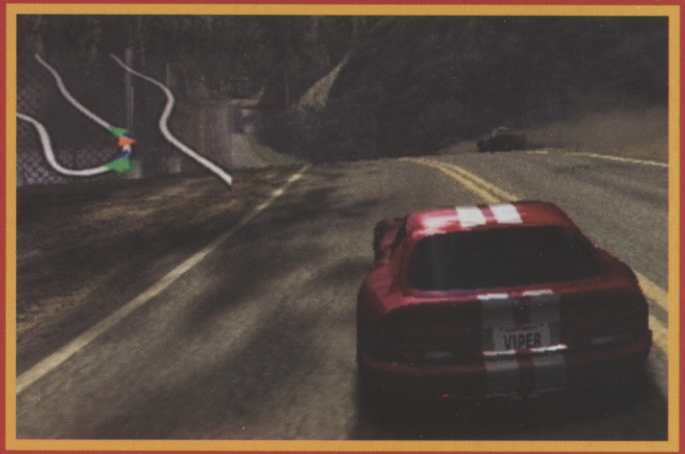
The Need For Speed games have never really broken into the mainstream, but this latest effort proves that it's time to take notice. Boasting a set of truly delicious visuals, bundles of awesome challenges and turbocharged single and multiplayer modes, Hot Pursuit 2 is packed with so much tough, addictive action that you'll always find a reason to come back for more.

The handling of the different vehicles feels excellent, dramatic camera views kick in when you pull of a spectacular stunt, and you're rewarded with loads of extra bonus points for impressive manoeuvres.

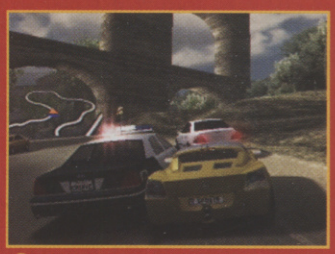
But Hot Pursuit 2's real hooks lie in the sheer intensity of every event and the feeling that you're treading a tightrope between being in control and crashing out spectacularly, just like in Burnout. Be sure to catch CVG's in-depth review next issue for the full lowdown.



You really do feel like you're travelling at dangerously fast speeds



Unlock super-quick cars and mint new tracks in the Ultimate Challenge events



There's so much to do in Hot Pursuit 2 that there's always an incentive to keep revisiting it

The cops are so insanely aggressive they should probably be the ones being busted

CVG RECKONS

Hot Pursuit 2 is burning up the inside lane and is poised to unleash a top quality driving surprise worthy of a parking space next to other big-time, adrenalin-fuelled racers like Burnout 2. Mike

CHASE ME!

One of the two player modes lets you select whether you're going to the cop or crazy civilian street racer. Get in

It's nail-biting stuff all the way. There's hardly time to think, blink or breathe

COLIN MCRAE 3

FORMAT: XBOX, PS2, PC
OUT: AUTUMN
DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS

CVG RECKONS

The daddy of the rally world is back and looking classier and more professional than ever. Go, Colin, go! Mike

Trent, Brad, Jack, Dean! Fearless names, simply oozing with testosterone. So who would have thought that one of the most daredevil rallying legends would boast a name that conjures up images of physics teachers and gimps?

He might have a crap name, but it's impossible to deny the fact that Colin has got mad skills. And not only is Colin McRae 3 a hardcore, manly, and seriously entertaining experience, it's possibly the most amazing-looking rally game ever made. No joke!

The cars look absolutely stunning as they kick up and get caked in dirt

MUDDY MARVELLOUS

If you caught last month's preview, you'll no doubt have been impressed by the stats: 56 stages and cars made up of 14,000 polygons for starters. But CM3's most impressive feature is its startling level of realism.

When you're sat inside the car with the wipers frantically flicking rain and mud rain off the smudged windscreen as you powerslide around a blind bend, we guarantee that adrenalin-induced goose bumps will pop up all over your body. No doubt, CM3 is the hot favourite for best rally game ever, and looking at these screens it's very easy to see why.

Don't lose control as you wheel-spin through the ice and snow

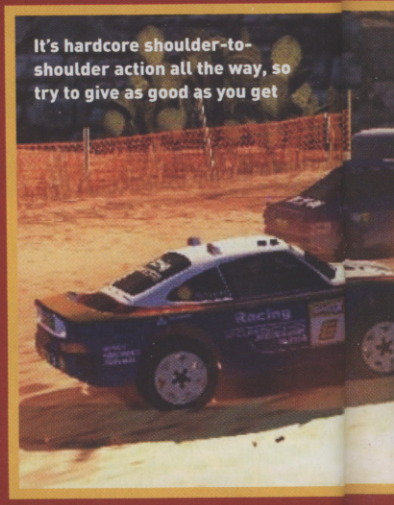
The windscreen wipers automatically switch on in grim downpours

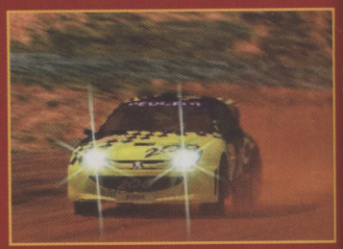
SHOX

FORMAT: PS2, GC
OUT: SEPT 27
DEVELOPER: EA BIG
PUBLISHER: EA

Though top class, the Colin McRaes and V-Rallies of this world often feel so sensible and strait-laced that you almost expect them to come in an antique mahogany box marked, 'Why not enjoy playing it with a nice cup of tea and a piece of cake?'.

Shox, on the other hand, yells out to be enjoyed with a few loud mates, a crate of beer, and a big smile on your boat race. Though based in the real world, Shox is aiming to provide you with a flamboyant, circuit-based, mega-fast arcade rallying experience in the vein of Sega Rally. On top of that, it's packing a bunch of other fun-loving features beneath its polished chassis too.


It's hardcore shoulder-to-shoulder action all the way, so try to give as good as you get


The feeling of speed as you rip through the dust is sensational

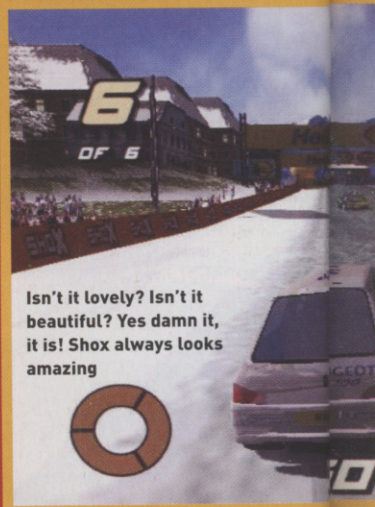
THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS

Vibrant sensations of speed, fun and beauty will hit you when you first compete in a race. A variety of amazingly dense and fantastic-looking tracks act as a perfect backdrop for the intense bumper-to-bumper action that fills every contest. The atmosphere is constantly engaging as you bolt and powerslide your way through a race, because the AI of your opponents is sufficiently well balanced that you are always involved in a close jostling battle for the lead.

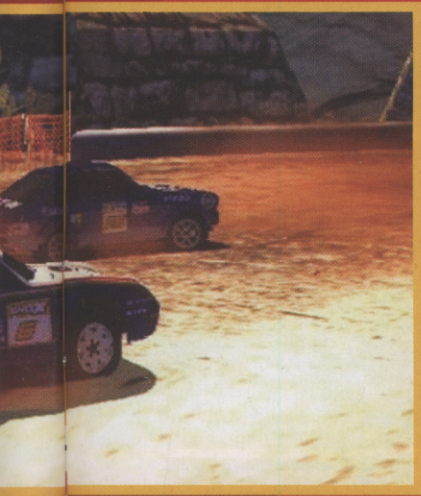
This funky Mini Cooper looks the business. Now go off and trash it!

RIDING THE SHOX WAVE

As you and five other cars wrestle it out in desert, ice and jungle environments, you're given extra incentive to tear around courses at ridiculous speeds, thanks to the Shox Zone feature. Every track has three Shox Zones per circuit, each zone marked with starting and finishing checkpoints. The moment you enter one of these zones, a countdown bar split into gold, silver and bronze sections is triggered. As time rapidly



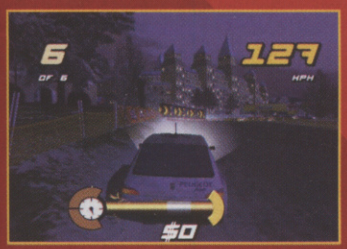
Isn't it lovely? Isn't it beautiful? Yes damn it, it is! Shox always looks amazing



ticks away, more and more of the gold section disappears, followed by silver, then bronze. Whichever of these sections is highlighted when you exit a zone is your reward. And if you manage to get three consecutive golds, and a Shox Wave erupts, the screen blurs, enabling you to pick up a serious amount of speed. Zang!

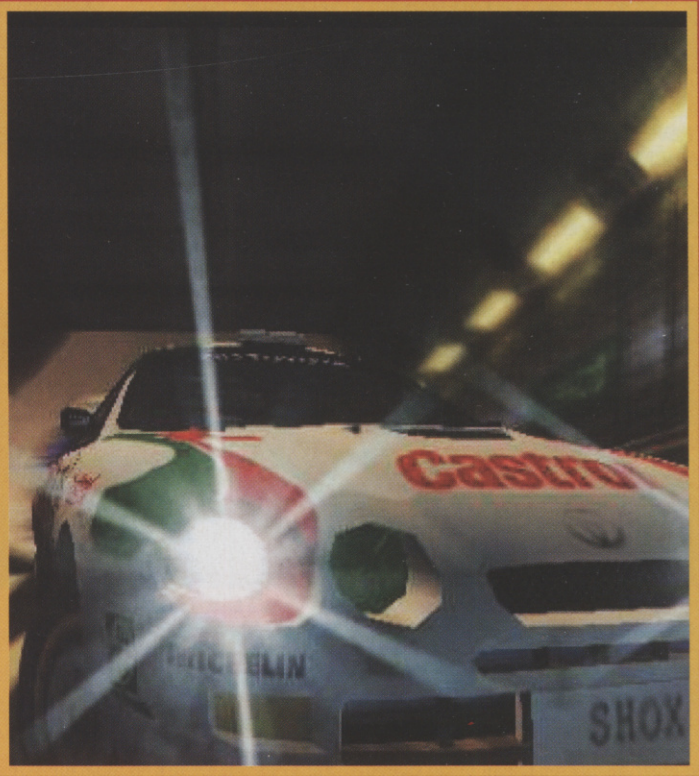
PAY TO PLAY

You earn cash whenever you come in the top three, and this money can be used to buy higher-class cars. There are 24 cool speed-mobiles to collect, including a Mini Cooper with a Union Jack paintjob and a new Porsche Carerra 4x4. You can tear the bumpers off and wreck the crap out of them. But if you do damage, it'll cost you a wedge of your prize earnings to repair.



Night races are brilliant fun. Make sure you don't smash your headlights

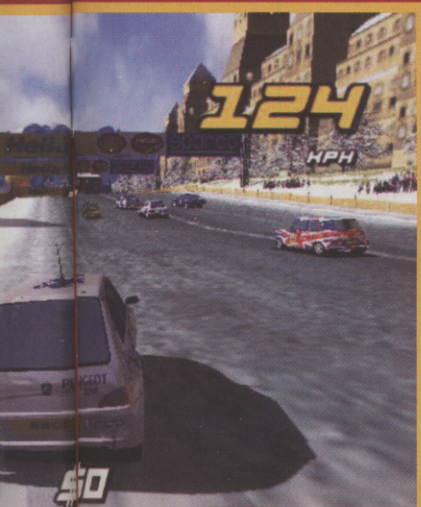
Time's ticking down. You'll have to hurry if you're going to get a Gold



This is the special 'Blinded Rabbit' camera view. Not great for judging corners

You get awarded a Gold for zipping through the Shox Zone in a killer time

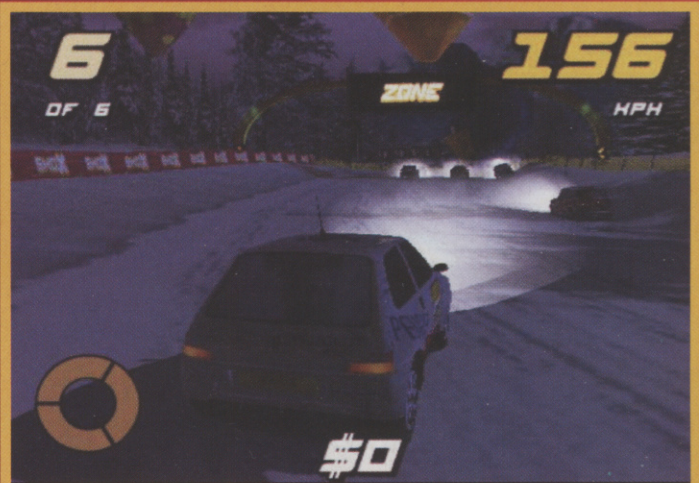
You throw your Toyota into the bend, in an effort to get out of sixth place



There are loads of four-player modes in the pipeline, where you can gamble for cash with your buddies to buy new cars. So it's a case of putting your money where your mouth is. You can't wuss out and reset during a race, because the amount you gamble is erased from your memory card before the race begins. This element is to be implemented in the singleplayer modes too. It's all or nothing!

CVG RECKONS

Sega Rally stuck a stick of dynamite up the tailpipe of straight-faced rallying games, and Shox's explosively entertaining arcade race action is set to carry on that tradition. Mike



Rack up some frighteningly high speeds. Even the small cars pack a punch

TOCA RACE DRIVER

FORMAT: PS2
OUT: SEPTEMBER
DEVELOPER: CODEMASTERS
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS

Realistic hardcore racing games have been stony-faced and lacking any real human-interest elements – till now.

Some contests take place on standard Indy racetracks

Take a bend too quickly and you'll spin out, slam into the side and trash

TOCA Race Driver puts you behind the visor of plucky rookie driver Ryan McKane. He's the youngest in a famous racing family, and you have to steer him through a story-led Career mode stuffed with a huge array of edgy, super-fast, brilliantly bustling race events.

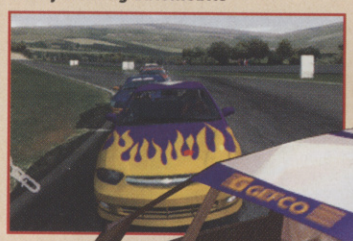
THIS IS NOT A CRASH TEST, DUMMY!
Don't expect to breeze through races in TOCA without ever stepping off the gas. That kind of arrogant driving technique will only result in you embarrassingly shooting off the track, skidding uncontrollably across the gravel and slamming into a barrier, hard. Just as in GT3, mastering when to brake before a corner and when to slam on the power coming out of a bend is the key to nailing fast laps and keeping your expensive automobile in one piece.

You'll soon realise when you step into TOCA's fiercely contested 14-car races that there's no room for lightweight drivers. You have to be committed, focused and willing to push yourself to the limit to shrug off the other AI drivers and slip into first place. It's no easy task. But that's TOCA all over.

Check out those alloys. The tyres are wafer thin to help you stick to the road

Watch the map in the bottom left to know when to expect sharp bends

A lot of the cars are kitted out with snazzy paintjobs. Check out this funky flaming automobile



The in-car view reduces your field of vision quite a bit but the atmosphere of behind the wheel is fantastic

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

FORMAT: GC
OUT: OCTOBER
DEVELOPER: SCI
PUBLISHER: SCI

SCi's upcoming arcade rally title is hoping to inject a blinding spark of speed and nail-biting, gravel-flying action exclusively onto Nintendo's happy plastic handbag. But with arcade bad boys Shox and Burnout 2 also screeching onto GC, Rally Championship is going to have its work cut out if it's hoping to steal the limelight.

Nowadays for an arcade-style rally game, it's common for there to be multi-car Rally Cross races, but Rally Championship has opted to keep the action confined to the classic one-car mould. However, there is a split-screen multiplayer option, enabling you and three other mates to pit your speedy skills against each other.

DAMAGE LIMITATION
Standard Arcade and Quick Rally modes are supported by a Career option, starting you off with 20 grand with which to buy a motor and hit the tracks. All the cars can be totalled, and the damage modelling is looking pretty good so far. With 33 tracks to burn around, it definitely isn't short of scenery changes either.

But with such simple gameplay and so few game modes, will Rally Championship have enough oomph to keep EA and Criterion's upcoming road hogs at bay? You'll have to watch this space.

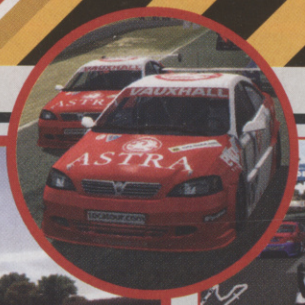
CVG RECKONS

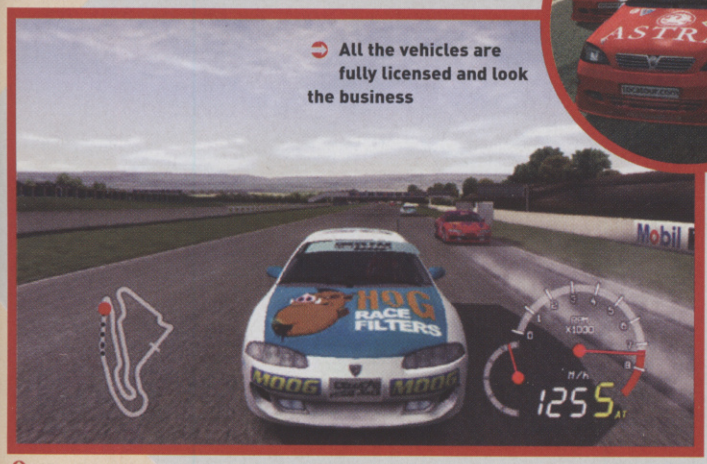
Rally Championship's fast, one-car, checkpoint-chasing arcade action is good fun for sure, but without many optional extras, Shox and Burnout 2 aren't exactly trembling in their boots. Mike

This badly timed corner will cost you at least a few quid's worth in damage. Damn!

The in-car view is where you'll experience the greatest sensation of sheer speed

With over 25 unlockable fully licensed cars, you could find yourself spoilt for choice. Or not





All the vehicles are fully licensed and look the business

Check behind you when approaching a turn, to see where the other cars are

Slam the accelerator to the floor on long stretches for stupidly high speeds

The cars feel like their gripping to the tarmac as you swing round corners

This weird creation is one of the cool cars you unlock along the way

It's always important to get a flying start if you want to dominate a race

You are Ryan McKane, a rookie driver from a famous racing family

THESE ENGINES DON'T PURR, THEY ROAR

As well as presenting you with some killer visuals and a mad feeling of pure speed, the physics of the cars feels very solid. Lurching forward when you break heavily and leaning realistically around bends, you get a true sense of how heavy they are. And the sound of the deep growling engines gives you a great sensation of the impressive horsepower they're packing under their solid bonnets.

Thankfully, for all the effort and energy that you put into perfecting your skills come the rewards. A total of 38 circuits are available in the 13 different race series staggered throughout TOCA's Career mode. You can also unlock a whopping total of 42 killer cars with your earnings. This strong combination of top-grade action, loads of extras and a potentially engaging story line should be enough to keep your attention well and truly fuelled.

However, quite how well a fictional character-based plot will fit in with the strait-laced realistic action on offer in TOCA Race Driver is yet to be fully explored. Next month, though, CVG's review will uncover the truth and dish out the real verdict.

CVG RECKONS

Codemasters has a major heavyweight tag-team on its hands with Colin McRae 3 and TOCA. And by the looks of it, TOCA's great looks, depth and new story-led structure could make it a force to be reckoned with. Look out, GT3. Mike

There are few things to beat the feeling of powersliding a Subaru Impreza round a tight bend

Compete in events all over the world, including Rally Africa, Arctic Lapland, and the exotic Scottish Rally

CRAZY TAXI 3: HIGH ROLLER

FORMAT: XBOX
OUT: SEPTEMBER 20
DEVELOPER: HITMAKER
PUBLISHER: INFOGRAMES

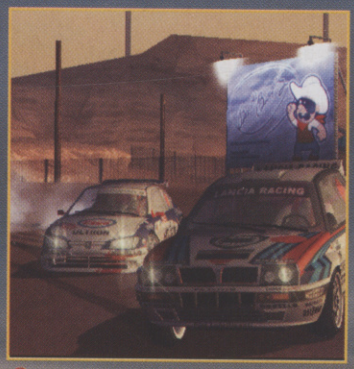
This Xbox exclusive follows firmly in the tradition of the previous two ker-azy episodes on DC. Again it's a case of picking up unsuspecting citizens with frankly insane time deadlines and maniacally blasting your way through busy city streets with a complete disregard for public property. This anarchic behaviour is always good for a laugh. So with three new city locations to explore, and new nutty characters and cars, this version will surely please old fans of the series.

Now when you boost, flames erupt from your tyres

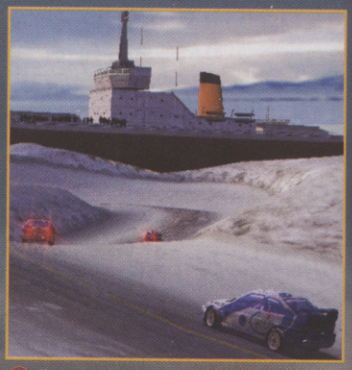
RALLY FUSION

You can unlock new co-drivers throughout the game, including a sexy woman with an Italian accent. Miaow!

The arcade handling of the cars is very forgiving. But watch you don't shoot off a bend and into a ditch



You'll constantly find yourself caught in a tight pack of cars and fighting to win the lead



Ooh, look at that huge cruise ship! The views from some of Rally Fusion's tracks are pretty dramatic

FORMAT: PS2, XBOX
OUT: NOVEMBER
DEVELOPER: CLIMAX
PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION

You might have guessed by now that rally games are somewhat flavour of the moment. However, in order to separate itself from the pack, each game has first got to grab you by the short and curlies and seize your attention with its unique charms.

Admittedly that's a tough one in the highly competitive world of rally games. But Fusion's mix of slick arcade-style action, inventive game modes, yummy visuals and fat selection of wreckable cars is enough to excite CVG into giving it a full service.

YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE

The intense Elimination mode sees you and three other cars jostle it out through a series of checkpoints. The last driver through each checkpoint is knocked out of the contest. Second place counts for nothing in this game, folks.

The Lancia Stratos: it might look like a remote-controlled car but it goes like a rocket

This ruthless winner-takes-all attitude is carried over in the Follow The Leader mode. Each driver has an energy gauge, which gradually depletes when you're not winning, forcing you to mercilessly wrestle for the lead. Play dirty! Ram your opponents into the barriers, cut them up and do anything that'll give you the edge.

CHECKPOINT CHARLIE

As you'd hope, standard arcade Sega Rally-style time-based checkpoint action is here. As are loads of other cool modes, such as the Race of Champions, Hill Climb, Rally Cross and Circuit. And no decent rally game would be complete without a decent array of monster vehicles. The classics all make an appearance, like the Toyota Corolla and Subaru Impreza. But unlock the likes of the mean-looking Lancia Stratos, and you're laughing.

Rally Fusion is packing a boot-load of fun, but in order to rival EA's seriously promising rally thriller, Shox, it'll have to pull out all the stops.

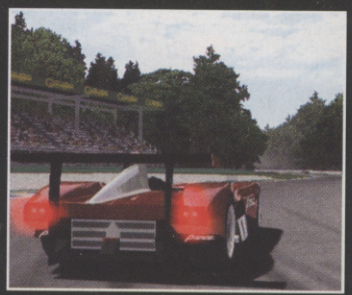
TOTAL IMMERSION RACING

FORMAT: PS2, XBOX, PC
OUT: WINTER
DEVELOPER: RAZORWORKS
PUBLISHER: EMPIRE INTERACTIVE

This plush racer puts you in the body of a wee rookie with a glint in his eye and the dream of becoming the best of the best.

It's a bit cheesy, but Total Immersion Racing is shaping up nicely, with a solid AI system that sees your opponents remember how you've reacted and treated them in a race.

Each driver has his own personality, so you've got to remember that if you cut them up or ram them off the track, they'll try to get their own back at any time during your career. Be keeping a close eye out for this one.



Woah, check that spoiler. This puppy won't be taking off any time soon

The vehicles in Total Immersion Racing are looking very fine indeed

Hit the rear camera view button to check up on where the others are

A cheeky Audi TT swings in front, forcing you to hit the brakes sharply

The in-car view makes the action feel a helluva lot faster

Take the inside lane, cut up these chumps, and climb up two places

CVG RECKONS

If the AI system works well, this slick speedster could qualify alongside the better known next-gen racers out there. **Mike**

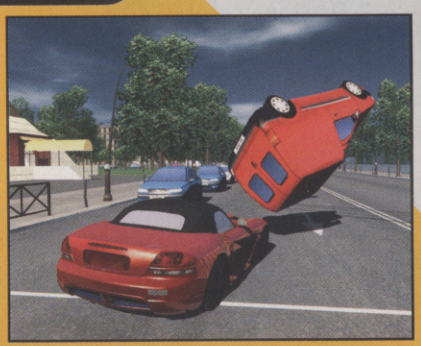
Whack side-on into a barrier and you'll damage the doors, and they'll flap open as you bounce around

CVG RECKONS

Rally Fusion is all about having fun. So with a few nifty arcade play modes in place and some awesome cars in its garage, this muddy mutha is hoping to wheel-spin dust into the eyes of its competitors and storm into pole position. We'll see, shall we? Mike

MIDTOWN MADNESS 3

FORMAT: XBOX
OUT: AUTUMN
DEVELOPER: DIGITAL ILLUSIONS
PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT



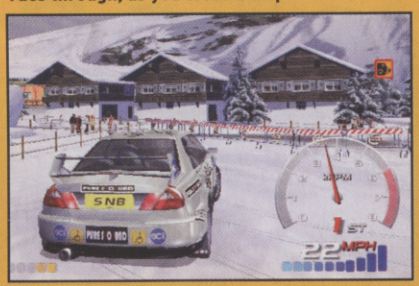
The visuals are looking oh-so-shiny and very crisp

This latest sequel in the Midtown Madness series sees you embarking on over 50 missions in all sorts of professions, from police officer to pizza delivery guy.

The two cities in which the action takes place are very detailed and buzzing with life. So with 14 careers, more than 30 cars to unlock and online play enabling you to challenge mates over the net, MM3 is looking peachy.

GUMBALL 3000

FORMAT: PS2
OUT: SEPTEMBER
DEVELOPER: CLIMAX
PUBLISHER: SCI



There's a good variety of environments to race through, as you cross Europe

Gumball 3000 is based on the world's craziest real life rally – 3000 miles across Europe with a team of rock stars, supermodels, and anyone with a supercar and an attitude.

Okay, so in this sense 'rally' just means 'loads of vehicles travelling the same route'. However, it does make for a cool arcade racer set across traffic-laden roads in countries including England, France, Germany and more besides.

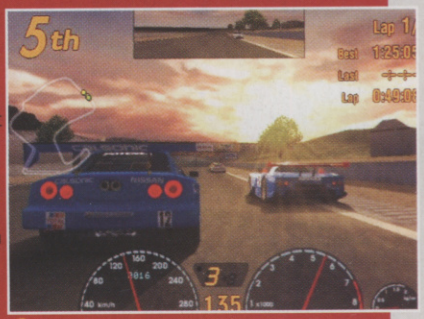
Technically, the Gumball Rally's not actually a race, and anyone caught speeding can be arrested. Bummer for the real drivers, but here it just means you'll have to evade cops as well as other racers as you clock up monster speeds. And you get to pick from a selection of 21 cars, all licensed from actual Gumball racers.

CVG'S TARMAC TITANS

Three driving game giants that won't be going out without a fight

It's almost impossible to hear yourself think what with the deafening sound of roaring engines approaching at speed over the horizon. But what are all these new driving games competing against apart from each other? This lot, that's who! And they're not just going to pull over onto the hard shoulder and let these young pups steal their thunder. Oh no.

GT3

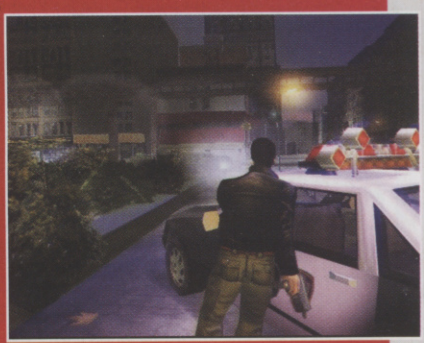


GT3 lifted the benchmark for realistic racers to a great height. Don't mess!

Everybody knows that GT3 still sits comfortably at the top of the driving game tree, throwing spare car parts down on any cheeky monkey bold enough to challenge its position as king of the track. Never has there been such an accessible and in-depth racer that has it all. Next time you put it in your PS2 or pass it on the shelves in your local games shop, bow and give it the respect it commands.

GRAND THEFT AUTO III

Okay, so it's not an out-and-out driving game, but considering so much of the action is spent in vehicles and tearing up Liberty City's scummy streets, CVG thinks GTAIII deserves to be in this top five. Fact is, the car chases, races, car physics and all round adrenalin-pumped action prove it's one of *the* finest driving experiences.



GTAIII demonstrates how exciting, edgy and extreme driving games can feel

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

Metropolis Street Racer may indeed have laid the foundations, but it was Project Gotham Racing that established Bizarre Creation's series as a force to be reckoned with. A series of awesome events, some truly mint cars, stunning damage modelling and brilliantly realistic real-life tracks to boot, make this the daddy of urban racers.

MSR's big brother has proved how city street racing should be done

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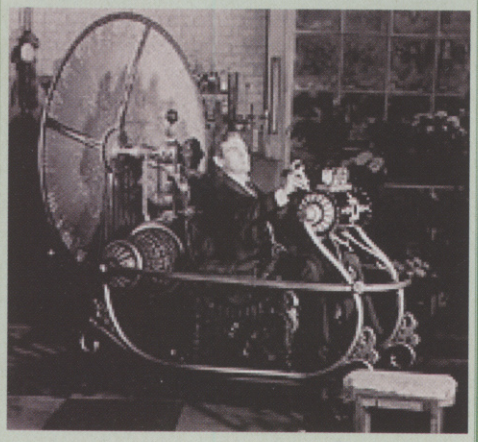

"Stop-O-Time lets me stretch and alter the space-time continuum to my heart's content. I was able to play Final Fantasy X for up to ten hours, when my wife believed I'd only been five minutes."
John Smith

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"Stop-O-Time III is backwards-compatible, meaning I was able to return to the present armed with all the horse-racing results I needed to become a multi-millionaire."
John Smith

Games For Girls

Female-orientated games: is this the future?

A new series of videogames aimed at female gamers is set to be released – even though girls are rubbish at games.

Developers The Lipstick Factory hope to attract girly players to the console market by inventing new games they can easily understand and play. Two games, Make Friends, Break Friends, and Extreme Shopping 2002, are already in the pipeline from Lipstick Factory, with more to follow.

"In the past, girls have not been able to play games," said Lipstick Factory's CEO Nicholas Kidd. "When they play driving games they wave the joypad around, often in the direction they want their on-screen car to move. And girls often accuse games of being 'stupid' and spend hours running into walls during Resident Evil.

"We hope our new range will persuade girls to play games, as well as convincing console manufacturers such as Sony that their consoles should come in pink with pictures of puppies and kittens in baskets as the loading screen."

MAKE FRIENDS, BREAK FRIENDS

FOR: PS2
RELEASE: TBA

Players must befriend other characters and form strong alliances by wearing each other's clothes and jewellery, before 'breaking friends' – usually over a pathetic and trivial issue like who is the best-looking member of A1.

The ultimate aim is to 'make friends' again, scoring extra points for over-dramatic Big Brother-style hugging and unnecessary weeping.

Realistic graphics only increase the pain of loss

EXTREME SHOPPING 2002

FOR: PS2
RELEASE: TBA

Assemble your group of friends (or 'gull-fray-ends' if you're playing the R&B mode) and go shopping.

This scene is taken from the Arndale Centre level

Players must begin by stealing money from their mothers' purses before mounting daytime raids on Claire's Accessories and TopShop.

They will also gain points for linking arms along the High Street, screaming at each other as loudly as possible, and sending trivial text messages, such as 'We at Brgr Kng. Pls cm'.

Save Our Streets!

Nintendo Slammed For Dangerous Mario Moustache Craze

Nintendo has come under fire over the latest teenage craze – growing a moustache just like Mario's.

Now that turning baseball caps the wrong way round and wearing one trouser leg shorter than the other is yesterday's fashion, today's streetwise urban kids have taken to roaming the streets with facial hair just like Nintendo's famous plumber.

Yesterday, as London mayor Ken Livingstone pledged to visit Japan in a desperate bid to persuade Nintendo heads to change Mario's look, gangs of unshaven teenagers were marauding city estates calling out, "It's a-me, Dean," before torching abandoned cars and scaring shopkeepers.

Rural teenagers are less easily tempted by crime, drugs and Mario's moustache

Deprived city kids, starved of parental love, are turning to Mario's facial hair for release

In Other News

THOUSANDS OF XBOX OWNERS COMPLAIN
"You can't open Microsoft Word," they complain. "And how do I access my spreadsheets?"

JORDAN USES NEW BABY FOR PUBLICITY PURPOSES
"Baby Harvey's better than any PR officer," beams the proud new mum.

MAN WITH NO HANDS IMPALES HIMSELF ON BOLLARD
"I had an itchy backside," he tells doctors.

DOCTOR DIES LAUGHING
His last words words are, "It was the bollard guy".

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Without Me - *Eminem*	111952	Two Wrongs - *Wyclef Jean*	112001	Blurry - *Puddle Of Mudd*	111974
Any One Of Us - *Gareth Gates*	111988	Get Me Off - *Basement Jaxx*	111986	Whenever Wherever - *Shakira*	111661
Just Wont Do - *Tim Deluxe*	112000	Shooting Star - *Flip N Fill*	111987	Light My Fire - *Will Young*	111414
LittleLessConversation-*ElvisvsJXL*	111957	Loves Me Not - *Papa Roach*	111989	Be Cool - *Paffendorf*	111962
Babys Got A Temper - *Prodigy*	111990	2 Way - *Shaggy*	111991	Dove - *Moony*	111978
Kiss Kiss - *Holly Valance*	111898	Underneath Your Clothes - *Shakira*	111992	Don't Let Me Get Me - *Pink*	111930
The Logical Song - *Scooter*	111965	Hero - *Chad Kroeger*	111966	At Night - *Shakedown*	111963
How Come U Don't Call Me -*Alicia Keys*	111993	It Takes More - *Ms Dynamite*	111967	Oops Oh My - *Tweet*	111932
Full Moon - *Brandy*	111994	Just A Little - *Liberty X*	111935	Best In Me - *Blue*	111950
Emerge - *Fischerspooner*	111995	Stop Crying Your Heart Out - *Oasis*	111968	Freak Like Me - *Sugababes*	111896
Gonna Be Alright - *Jennifer Lopez*	111996	Get Over You - *Sophie Ellis Bextor*	111969	Temple Of Dreams - *Future Breeze*	111953
Mother - *M Factor*	111997	Unchained Melody - *Gareth Gates*	111684	La La Land - *Green Velvet*	111954
By The Way - *Red Hot Chilli Peppers*	111998	Julie - *Shaggy & Ali G*	111666	Love At First Sight - *Kylie*	111955
		When U Look At Me - *Christina Milian*	111981	Were On The Ball - *Ant and Dec*	111958

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Marchin' On Together Leeds	111350
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Blue Moon Man City	111352
Glory Glory Man United	111353
Great Escape	111354
Hou'll Let The Dogs Out Liverpool	111355
Eat My Goal Collapsed Lung	111356
Toon Army Anthem Newcastle	111357
3 Lions Baddiel & Skinner	111494
Match of the Day	111126
POPULAR	
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In My Eyes - Milk inc.	111940
Bop Bop Baby - Westlife	111941
Heartless - Heartless Crew	111942
Da Leader- Nigel & Marvin	111943
Sunglasses@Nite Tiga & co	111944
Attitude - Alien Ant Farm	111946
Livin It Up - Ja Rule	111931
Fly By II - Blue	111664
The Hindu Times - Oasis	111895
Lazy - X Press 2	111897
Girlfriend - NSYNC	111933
Make It Good - A1	111934
Just A Little - Liberty X	111935
Made Of Stars - Moby	111936
Its Ok - Atomic Kitten	111938
Hungry - Kosheen	111899
Get Happy - Zoe Birkett	111928
Ride Wit Us - So Solid Crew	111667
BreakYaNeck-BustaRhymes	111670
You Remind me-Nickelback	111671
Aint It Funny (Remix) - J Lo	111690
Oi - More Fire Crew	111692
Tainted Love - M Manson	111888
4 My People - Missy Elliott	111890
Shake UR Body - Shy FX	111891
Champagne Dance-£AsUGo	111894
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Reason - Ian Van Dahl	111926
Escape - Enrique Inglesias	111927
Let's Push Things -Streets	111929
Don't Let Me Get Me - Pink	111930
DANCE	
Shooting Star - Bang	111588
Resurrection - PPK	111550
La Passion - Gigi D'agostino	111693
Castles In Sky - Ian Van Dahl	111270
Time To Burn - Storm	111835
Sandstorm - Darude	111290

Brainbug - Nightmare	111510
Heart of Gold - Bang	111753
Fire Wire - Cosmic Gate	111284
Airwave - Rank	111592
Set You Free - N Trance	111445
Touch Me - Rui Da silva	111839
Universal Nation - Push	111841
The Prophet - CJ Bolland	111831
Starlight - Supermen Lovers	111387
Café Del Mar - Energy 52	111386
Hide U - Kosheen	111379
Out Of Control - Darude	111391
The Launch - DJ Jean	111365
On The Move - Barthezz	111447
This Is Russian Trance - PPK	111834
You Are Alive - Fragma	111844
Belissima - DJ Quicksilver	111712
Camels - Santos	111721
Pulsar - Mauro Piccotto	111695
9PM til I come - ATB	111158
Club Bizarre - Brooklyn Bounce	111725
Equador - Sash	111739
Zombie Nation - KernKraft 4000	111252
Insomnia - Faithless	111763
Judgement Day - Dirt Devils	111765
THEMES	
Mission Impossible	111121
Only Fools And Horses	111369
Harry Potter	111548
Axel F Beverley Hills Cop	111601
Match of the Day	111126
Teletubbies	111688
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The A Team	111115
James Bond	111119
Spiderman	111645
The Good, The Bad & The Ugly	111181
Muppets	111134
Benny Hill	111139
Rocky	111141
Scooby Doo	111142
633 Squadron	111608
Formula One	111610
Red Dwarf	111611
Ghostbusters	111455
Rainbow Theme	111562
The Terminator	111602
Batman	111606
Pinky And The Brain	111607
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Hey Baby - DJ Otzi
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It's in your eyes
On a night like this

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Because I Got High -Afroman
Fight Music - D12
Blow Ya Mind - Eve & Gwen Stefani

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Can I wait to U 141004	141095	Text me you B★★★★★D 141038	141267
141162	SK8 141517	Ozzy 141538	Buzz Off 141479
Swing your Pants 141050	My other phones an 8350 141602	Don't Touch What You Can't Afford 141564	I Dig Ya 141593

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LOGO COMPATIBILITY - NOKIA: 402, 702, 3210, 3310, 3330, 5110, 5130, 5146, 5510, 6110, 6130, 6150, 6210, 6250, 7110, 8810, 8210, 8310, 8810, 8850, 8890, and 9110(i) ERICSSON: T20e, R520m

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Babe 131572	United 131210	Eminem 131396	Ireland 131596	England 1315208	No Fear 131107	Break Glass Press Here 131141	131117
Toucha my phone slappa your face 131688	Happy as a pig in.. 131691	131692	English And Proud 131682	Sonic 131478	No-Angel 131147	same stuff different day 131588	porn★ 131111

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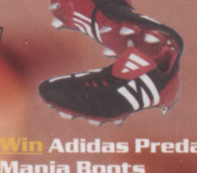

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